

# AUGUSTA HISTORICAL BULLETIN



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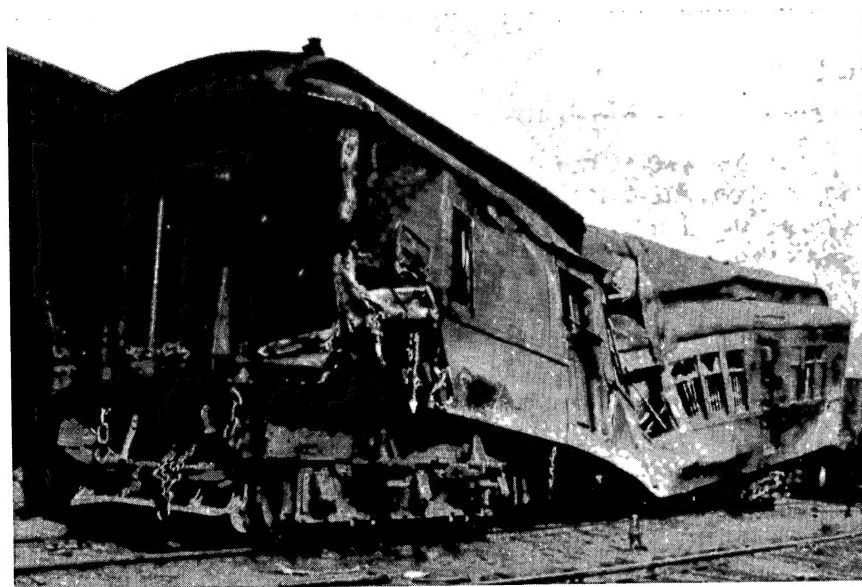
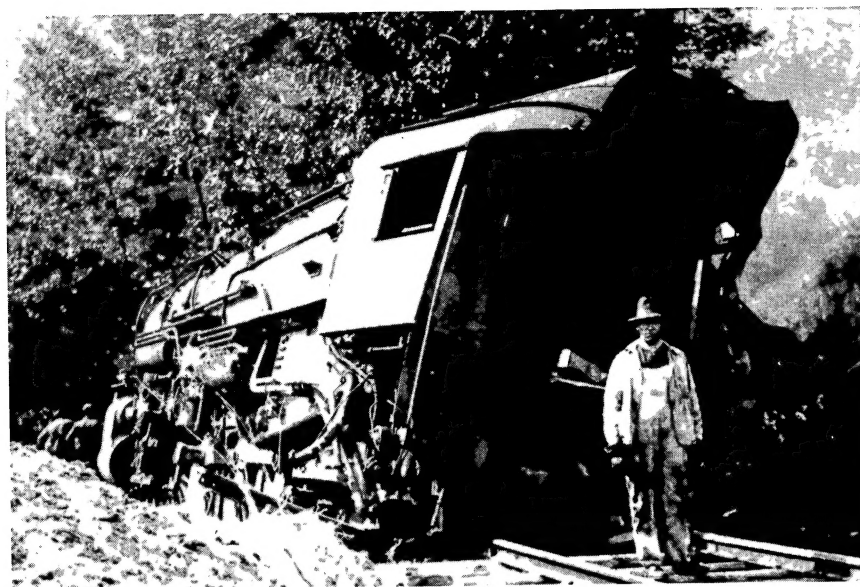
## CONTENTS

RAILROAD WRECKS IN STORY AND SONG .....	Paul Shue
STAUNTON A GENERATION AGO .....	Joseph A. Waddell
A LOOK AT GIVEN NAMES IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY .....	Carroll Lisle
DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION TO BECOME UNITED STATES CITIZENS	
OLD HOMES OF AUGUSTA COUNTY: Part III, Landmark Project Series .....	Katherine G. Bushman
RUN-OF-THE-MILL .....	Richard S. Lewis
OLD HOMES OF AUGUSTA COUNTY: Chapel Hill .....	Gladys B. Clem
LIST OF MEMBERS	

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"The Wreck of C & O Number 5," October 5, 1920.

Locomotive, above; mail car, below.

Courtesy, E. M. Whanger

## RAILROAD WRECKS IN STORY AND SONG

Paul Shue\*

With a clear block into Heaven's gate, he'll pull his mighty train,  
And there, in God's own roundhouse, he'll register his name.

In language such as this the songwriters and folk singers of the past have left for all of us a golden musical treasure that tells of the heroes of steam railroading and depicts for us, often in banal and lugubrious phrases, the heartbreak as well as the history of the wrecks along the tracks.

The couplet quoted above is from the song story of "The Wreck of C & O Number 5," a tragedy on the main line of the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway in October 1920. The wreck is but one of a half dozen or so which will be covered in this article. Before getting too deeply into the C & O stories, however, let me take a few moments to make some introductory remarks about railroading and in particular offer a few comments about the music of the railroads.

From the very beginning of railroading in America the music makers began to write and to sing about the men who built and operated the railroads. At the time of the great potato famine in Ireland many of the people of that country came to America to find a new way of life. It was only natural that with the railroad industry in its vigorous beginnings at the time a great number of the Irish people went to work for the American railroads. It also happened quite naturally that many of them were destined to find their employment with the Erie Railroad, working in and around the great city of New York. Thus, we arrive at the conclusion that the first railroad song in America of any importance was "Paddy works on The Erie." Soon, other songs blossomed; these were not only sung by the people but also by the men themselves as they laid the tracks and shed their sweat over the miles.

A number of railroad songs depicted the tyrannical bosses of the gangs who labored long and hard to lay the rails. One such song which became a standard among all railroad people was "Drill, ye Tarriers, Drill." Just what the word *tarrier* implied

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\*This is the narration which accompanied an audio-visual talk given by Mr. Shue at the fall 1972 meeting of the Society.



is still debated; most of us believe that it was simply another term for *loafer*. At any rate, this song was having its heyday at about the same time the industry was enjoying its period of greatest vigor—the 1880's.

The more romantic and glamorous a subject the more fertile a field for the song writers and the singers. Surely, none can deny that the railroad with its mighty, almost humanlike, steam engines was a very apt subject for the music makers of the land. The latter seized upon every aspect of the shining rails and the trains that plied them to create a new musical approach to this giant business that had come to America. But perhaps the railroad songs that will live in history more prominently than all the rest are those that tell of the days of sadness and the nights of heartbreak that resulted from disaster — the torn tracks, the crumpled engines, and the engineers who, like ships' captains at sea, stayed with their mighty iron horses to the end. To a collector of railroad songs these are the important ones — real stories of real men making real American history.

As a youngster I grew up alongside the tracks of the Chesapeake and Ohio. At one place where I lived the main line of that railroad lay within two hundred feet of our farmhouse. In those years of the twenties and thirties passenger and freight trains were frequent passers-by. There must have been fifteen to twenty trains rolling past our backyard on any given day. To one concerned today with environmental noises it might seem that the succession of trains would have been unbearable. Never. Like the ticking of a grandfather's clock or the sound of a passing automobile, the sound of a passing train was never noise to any of us; rather, it was another form of sweet music, loud at times perhaps, but never disturbing.

It was a combination of this closely woven life with the Chesapeake and Ohio and a family involvement with that company that endeared me to it then and causes me to attest even today that the Chesapeake and Ohio was, in its glorious days, about the greatest railroad America ever knew. Family involvement included a total of seventy-plus years of employment with the American Railway Express Company, later the Railway Express Agency; three of my older brothers served during those years.

Any discussion of railroad songs must, of necessity, be limited to one aspect of the broad field. So, in view of my personal love affair with the Chesapeake and Ohio and the fact also that this

railroad, great as she has been, has provided us with perhaps more songs of tragedy than any other, let me relate some of these historic happenings. Let us meet some of the dedicated men who lost their lives and have a look at some of the circumstances involved in these unfortunate occurrences.

Of course, there were many wrecks on the railroads of our nation; most of them, to be sure, never had their story told in song. Also it should be pointed out that many of the songs of railroading and of disasters are concerned with wrecks which took the lives of very few people — only one in many cases. Perhaps the most famous railroad engineer of all time, Casey Jones, became known to us all simply because a black engine wiper in the Canton, Mississippi, roundhouse wanted to immortalize his hero, the engineer, and wrote a song about him. Casey was the only casualty in that wreck at Vaughn, Mississippi, back in 1900.

Conversely, there have been any number of rail disasters in which a great many people died but which remain virtually unknown to this day, simply because there was nobody around who chose to write a song about them. A prime example is the July 9, 1918 disaster at Nashville, Tennessee, which killed 99 persons and injured 171. Yet, to the best of this writer's knowledge, it was never recorded in song. The Chatsworth wreck in eastern Illinois in 1887 took the lives of 82 people; this wreck was recorded in poetry but never made into a song as far as I can determine.

What can account for the fact that the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway has given us so many wreck songs? Perhaps a combination of reasons should be considered. First, there is the physical aspect of the railroad itself: the topography of the Appalachian mountain region through which much of the Chesapeake and Ohio track was laid. Mountains meant steeper grades; the rivers which flowed alongside the line often went on rampage, spilling water onto the tracks and weakening underpinnings of trestles and bridge supports. The Guyandotte Bridge disaster in 1913 was a direct result of such conditions.

Mountain country also meant curving tracks, laid to follow the general run of the rivers as they twisted, snakelike in many instances, through the Allegheny Mountains and traversing a wide area of rugged country all the way from Gordonsville, Virginia, to West Virginia's capital city of Charleston.

There was also another ingredient to help account for the preponderance of songs about the Chesapeake and Ohio. Appalachia has meant music through the years — the native, homespun balladry and the sounds of the mountain guitar, the banjo, the harmonica, and the fiddle. These instruments would doubtless have wasted away on cabin walls in the hill country except for the fact that the music-loving countryfolk needed songs to sing to make their lives both tolerable and joyful. So they wrote songs, songs about almost anything including religion, love affairs, and death. When the railroads came along, it was naturally new ground for their musical exploitation; every railroad wreck provided a choice opportunity to put their talents to work.

Many of the songs were simply made up and sung; no words were ever written down. Often they were passed from one to another simply in the singing, and this accounts in large measure for the fact that there are so many versions of all the songs. There were cases, however, in which the author wrote the words and supplied the music to a music publisher or to a recording company, hopeful always of a quick fortune in record sales. Few ever made it; among the exceptions are the authors of several of the songs covered in the following pages. Notable among the songs are "The Wreck of the 1256," "The Wreck of C & O Number 5," and "Billy Richardson's Last Ride."

As a collector of the songs of steam railroading, I must express thanks to all who have helped. There are a few who should receive special credit: Ron Lane of Columbus, Indiana, who has done a great deal of research and reporting on Chesapeake and Ohio stories; Norm Cohen of the John Edwards Foundation on the UCLA campus; and Pick Temple, my friend and former TV star in Washington and now residing in Sun City, Arizona. There are many others who have helped in my railroad hobby; to list them all would be page consuming. Any collector always finds himself obligated to many people. Thanks to them all.

#### "The Wreck on the C & O" or "Engine 143"

Back in 1852 Captain Leonidas Salathiel Alley began his railroading career with the Chesapeake and Ohio, then known as the Virginia Central. At that time he could not have realized that he was to raise a generation of railroaders who would set a remarkable record of service for their company. Captain Alley was born in Petersburg, Virginia, in 1832 and spent his early life in the state, living later at Staunton and at Jackson Depot.

He ran every sort of engine imaginable and is reported to have made the first run from Clifton Forge to Hinton when that part of the line opened in 1873.

One of the memorable events of his life concerned a passenger run that he made during the Civil War. He had brought a load of Georgia soldiers from Jackson River Depot to Staunton one cold day in November 1861. The following is an excerpt from a letter written by A. H. Brently of Atlanta, Georgia, to Captain Alley in 1904:

... it was bitter cold, and as the night closed in with flakes of flying snow from the neighboring mountains, you grasped your lantern — your work finished and well done, you started for your home and the comforts that you knew waited you.

As you started you met, at the door of the telegraph office 4 or 5 soldiers who were seeking some place of shelter from the weather, all the public houses being filled to overflowing.

You, out of the goodness of your heart took them home with you and gave them a hearty Virginia hospitality with all that it implies.

Ah! How well I remember when we reached your house — you knocked on the door, and a soft, tender voice asked, "Who's there?" "It's me, Cassie, and I've brought some Georgia soldiers to spend the night with us."

My dear friend, have you forgotten her reply? I never have, and here it is: "They are more than welcome if they are soldiers, it matters not from where they come."

Of the little squad of Georgia soldiers that sat at your table that November night I believe that I am the only one who has not passed over the river and to rest under the trees.

Six of Captain Alley's sons also saw service with the Chesapeake and Ohio. The combined services, including pensions of father and sons, amounted to approximately 275 years, and one or another of the Alleys received pay for 102 years! This is certainly one of the longest records of faithful service with the same railroad in history. It should also be pointed out that not one of the Alley family ever received any sort of reprimand for negligence or poor service. Three of the Alley boys were involved in wrecks while working for the C & O, but only George was destined to die in a train disaster.

George Alley was born in Richmond, Virginia, July 10, 1860. At a very young age he was a fireman for his father's engine. He soon became a locomotive engineman and later was known as the division's fastest engineer.

When the Chesapeake and Ohio inaugurated their prestigious Fast Flying Vestibules (FFV's) in the month of May 1889, it was only natural that George Alley be given one of the runs. This train, incidentally, was also referred to as the Fast Flying

Virginian, a name perhaps better known and more popular since by it she was to be identified for many years to come.

George's regular run was from Clifton Forge to Hinton on westbound Number 3, returning to Clifton Forge on eastbound Number 4. It was on the dark and rainy early morning of October 23, 1890 when FFV Train No. 4 pulled into Hinton, West Virginia, more than an hour behind time. It was at Hinton that George Alley and his fireman, Lewis Withrow, were waiting to board Engine 134 and pull on into Clifton Forge, Virginia. Clifton Forge meant home and the end of the line for both men. Also boarding at Hinton was another fireman, Robert Foster, who had been substituting for Withrow.

Most engineers, naturally, were anxious to make up as much lost time as possible. With Engine 134 traveling at a fast rate, the beam of its headlight picked up a huge boulder that had fallen from a nearby cliff. Alley told Withrow to jump, while he (Alley) stayed with the engine and endeavored to bring the mighty mass of steel to a halt. Foster, the deadheading fireman, jumped out the window on the cliff side; Withrow tried to leap from the gangway on that side. Just as Withrow jumped, big Engine 134 slammed into the boulder and turned over on its right side; Withrow was sprayed with scalding water and burned badly. Meantime, still in the engine cab with his hand on the brake lever, George Alley was pinned tight by the reverse bar. He suffered a broken arm and a broken leg and was scalded severely by the escaping steam and hot water.

For five long and painful hours George Alley lay there, waiting for help. One of the songwriters penned the line: "Are they coming? Are they coming?" This referred supposedly to his family. Railroad officials and others tried to get Alley's wife and children to the crash scene, but he died before they arrived.

Tributes of generous praise and of sympathy came from all over, for George Alley was a man of supreme dedication and an exemplary citizen of his day. On his gravestone in Alderson, West Virginia, this inscription appears: "George W. Alley, B. of L. E., died from injuries received on C & O Ry. October 23, 1890. Aged 30 y's, 3 m's, & 13 d's. Rest sweetly dear in thy lone grave sleeping. While we are weeping thy soul has flown to God's white throne." And on the other side of the stone are the words: "Dear George: our home is sad and lonely without thee."

The songs that came about as a result of George Alley's wreck and death were varied and numerous. It is my belief that

the many versions of the song, together with the acknowledged artists who have recorded and sung them, make "The Wreck on the C & O" or "Engine 143" the third most popular railroad song in America, ranking it behind "Casey Jones" and "Old 97." Of course, if we count "John Henry" as a pure railroad song, then the story in song about the FFV would drop a notch in the listings, making it number four at best.

At any rate, the song has known great popularity and has been sung and recorded in at least eighty versions. As with many others, the words were likely gathered by word of mouth, and the song's lyrics added to and taken from at the will of the performer. There are many discrepancies in the various versions, but this seems to be a natural ingredient in most of the old ballads. For example, the song is often sung under the title "Engine 143," when in fact the engine was numbered 134. Some versions name Jack Dickinson as the fireman. Not so — it was Lewis Withrow. One verse relates how "Georgie's mother came to him with a bucket on her arm." That couldn't be, since Georgie's mother had been dead for at least seventeen years when the wreck occurred. But these are just some of the expected errors and perhaps add a bit of spice and imagination to what might otherwise be rather drab lyrics.

Here is one of the many versions of "The Wreck on The C & O" or "Engine 143":

Along came the F.F.V., the swiftest on the line,  
Runnin' along that C and O road, just twenty minutes behind;  
Runnin' into Suville,\* headquarters on the line,  
Receiving their strict orders from the station just behind.

Georgie's mother came to him with a bucket on her arm;  
She said: "My darling son, be careful how you run;  
There's many a man has lost his life in tryin' to make lost time,  
But if you run your engine right, you'll get there just on time."

Up the track she darted, into a rock she crashed;  
Upside-down the engine turned, and Georgie's breast is smashed;  
His head lay against the fire-box door, the flames were rollin' high;  
"I'm proud to be born for an engineer, on the C&O road to die."

The doctor said to Georgie, "My darling boy be still;  
Your life may yet be saved, if it is God's blessed will."  
"Oh, no," cried George, "this will not do; I'd rather die so free;  
I want to die for the engine I love: One Hundred and Forty-Three."

\*Suville refers to Sewell, West Virginia.

And the doctor said to Georgie, "Your life cannot be saved."  
Murdered upon the railway, and laid in the lonesome grave.  
His face was covered up with blood, his eyes they could not see;  
And the very last words poor Georgie cried were "Nearer, My God,  
To Thee."

### "BILLY RICHARDSON'S LAST RIDE"

Little argument could ever be presented to the statement that Uncle Billy Richardson was the most colorful and best known of all Chesapeake and Ohio engineers. He was born in Hanover County, Virginia, April 29, 1848. He went to work for the old Virginia Central Railroad as a waterboy. Billy had an uncle who was an official with the Chesapeake and Ohio, successor to the Virginia Central, and it seemed only natural that young Billy take up railroading as his life work. Young Richardson loved the steam engines and very soon transferred to engine service with the Chesapeake and Ohio, eventually being promoted to the job of engineer.

For most of his railroading life Billy Richardson pulled the famed FFV's, the pride of the road. His regular run was west-bound on Number 3 from Hinton to Huntington; his return trip was on eastbound Number 4, The Washington Express, back into Hinton. He was an engineer with an enviable reputation for his ability to handle the big iron horse. He was considered to be unexcelled in the arts of easy starting, smooth stopping and handling emergency situations with wisdom and with skill. Uncle Billy probably came close to death on a number of occasions during his twenty-seven years of pulling trains through the mountain country of West Virginia. Yet, at the age of 62 and close to retirement, he was still regarded as a very alert and capable engineer. It is said that many people set their watches by Uncle Billy's trains; he never liked being behind schedule. He also had a habit of leaning far out of his cab window, waving in friendliness to people along the way young and old alike.

Many stories were told about Uncle Billy. There were stories about his craftsmanship as an engineer, about his daring and his bravery, and about some of his unusual characteristics. One such story relates how he sometimes started off on one of his runs not feeling up to par. Reportedly, he would turn up his faithful oil can, take a short drink of engine oil, and tell any who inquired about his unusual habit that he needed it and that it "done him good."

Richardson also was distinguishable by the long beard that he wore. There are conflicting stories as to just how long a beard it was, but some used to testify that it was a lengthy one. One retired Chesapeake and Ohio station agent from Coalburg, West Virginia, said once: "Yessirree, I can see ole Uncle Billy at the throttle yet . . . leanin' out of his cab . . . white whiskers blowin' in the breeze . . . eyes glued to the track ahead . . . peerin', peerin' . . . always peerin'."

Strangely, it was Uncle Billy's friendliness that led to his death. The date was December 14, 1910. He was pulling locomotive Number 161, which was an F-15 Pacific built in Richmond three years previously. Train Number 3, The Fast Flying Virginian, was headed west through the Alleghenies. As was his usual custom, Uncle Billy was leaning out of his cab window, waving to some of his friends who watched for his daily approach and passing. As he rounded a bend at Scary, near Montgomery, he once more sounded his whistle to warn some people who were walking along the tracks. One of them raised his hand in greeting toward Uncle Billy. The friendly old fellow waved back. For one quick moment, he took his eyes from the track. A mail crane flashed by — his skull was crushed! Cecil Lively, Uncle Billy's fireman, immediately saw what had happened and went to the aid of his engineer, who had slumped over his cab window. Lively took the train on in to Huntington, where Uncle Billy died in the Chesapeake and Ohio hospital that night. All the men who knew him agreed that was the way the bewhiskered old gentleman would have wanted it. Needless to say, word of his death brought shock and heartache up and down the tracks of the Chesapeake and Ohio.

The song, "Billy Richardson's Last Ride," was written by C. C. Meeks, presently living in Colonial Heights, Virginia. Meeks is a retired Norfolk and Western employee; he is also a cousin of the fireman who took the ill-fated train to Huntington. Meeks relates his own personal thrill at seeing Uncle Billy Richardson's train pass by when Meeks was a small boy.

The song was put to music by Carson Robison and first recorded by the fabulous Vernon Dalhart. A number of leading artists sang and recorded the ballad, but after a rather short period of popularity it took its place with many others as just another song in the collection of railroad music.

Here are the words of "Billy Richardson's Last Ride," as provided by the author:



Through the West Virginia mountains came the early morning mail;  
Old Number 3 was westbound, the fastest on the rail.

She pulled right into Hinton, a junction on the line,  
With a Baldwin Mountain engine, they made the run on time.

Billy Richardson at Hinton was called to take the run,  
To pull the fastest mail train from there to Huntington.

His fireman he reported for duty on the line,  
Then reading their train orders, left Hinton right on time.

Then Billy told his fireman that he would happy be  
If he could die while pulling a train like Number 3.

"I want to die on duty, right in my cab," said he,  
"While pulling eastbound Number 4, or westbound Number 3."

The fireman then said, "Billy, you know you're old and gray;  
Your name is on the pension list — you should retire some day."

But Billy said: "Dear fireman, the truth I'm telling you —  
I must die right in my engine cab, and nothing else will do."

Then pulling down New River came westbound Number 3,  
By Thurmond, then by Cotton Hill, no danger could he see.

His head then struck a mail crane, while pulling down the line.  
He'll never pull his train again to Huntington on time.

He's pulled the fastest freight trains, he's pulled the U.S. mail,  
He's pulled the fast excursions to the music of the rail.

He lost his life on duty, in his engine cab so free;  
He'll never pull his train again on westbound Number 3.

Now, ladies, if your husband is a railroad engineer,  
You know he is in danger, and death is ever near;

You know he loves you dearly when he is by your side;  
Remember well that his next run may be his farewell ride.

#### "THE WRECK OF C & O NUMBER 5"

From Washington to Charlottesville, then Staunton on the line . . .

\* \* \*

Undoubtedly the mere mention of one's home town in a song provides a quick two-strike advantage in influencing any collector of songs; however, this ballad of Chesapeake and Ohio railroading has some additional ingredients which make it, in the judgment of this Stauntonian, the best of all the songs of the rails.

First among them is the poetry of the song. C. C. Meeks, who authored this ballad along with "Billy Richardson's Last Ride" and others, set his rhymes in good order. The meter is good,

the lines are not nearly as repetitious as usual, and perhaps most important of all the text of the poem is factual, with one small exception. Enhancing the local flavor of the song is the fact that a railway mail clerk, Charlie Gully of Staunton, was killed in the mail car when the train wrecked, although his name goes unmentioned in the lyrics.

There has been some difference of opinion as to the actual date of the wreck. A letter from Edwin Long of the Chesapeake and Ohio Press Relations Department in Cleveland, dated July 18, 1952, states that the wreck occurred on the night of October 5, 1920. The Hinton, West Virginia, *Daily News* of October 6, 1920 relates the story as of "last night." These two documents would seem to be reliable. Perhaps the date of October 6 is accepted by some in view of the fact that the wreck happened so near midnight that it was the next day before the real story was learned. At any rate, the actual date seems relatively unimportant fifty-three years later.

Westbound train Number 5 left Staunton early that October evening pretty much on time; if late, it was only a matter of a few minutes. As she sped across the Valley of Virginia the autumn colors had begun to make their annual appearance. The evening was cool as more than two hundred passengers traveled the width of the Shenandoah Valley from Waynesboro to North Mountain and headed to Clifton Forge, Charleston, Huntington, and the heartland of the West.

Engine 137 pulled the train. According to the author of the song, C. C. Meeks, "... old 137 was government-built during World War I and at that time was the largest passenger locomotive in C & O service." The steep grades of the tracks from Staunton to Clifton Forge were no great problem for the big Mountain-type giant. Her screaming whistle sounded with authority; her rhythmic expulsions spoke with power. This was the pride of the Chesapeake and Ohio, and no one doubted her greatness and virtual infallibility.

It was at Clifton Forge that our dramatic story begins to unfold. Here is the big Chesapeake and Ohio yard complex; here is the Chesapeake and Ohio hospital, looking down from a hillside above. Clifton Forge was the change point for crewmen—the end of the line for some, the beginning of another run for others. At the mountain city that October night, R. D. "Dolly" Womack climbed aboard as engineer; his fireman was Charlie Poteet. The two men were not strangers; they had served together on many trips. Each man knew the dependability of the other.

The train soon rolled westward through Allegheny Tunnel and pulled into White Sulphur Springs on time. There, the telegraph operator had orders for Womack and Poteet to switch over to the eastbound track for the run to Ronceverte. They reportedly lost a little time in making the switchover, and as they pulled out of White Sulphur Springs the engineer looked at his watch and said, "We are four minutes late." According to author Meeks, these are the last words Womack ever spoke.

At Dixon, 3.1 miles west of White Sulphur, the train evidently hit a broken rail. The engine, strangely, did not turn over, but ploughed up over two hundred feet of ties and track, then veered off to the left, and buried itself up to the boilers in the soft ground. Charlie Poteet, the fireman, jumped and saved his life, coming out of the tragedy with a mere scratch on the back of his hand. Womack was not so fortunate. The tender, as it telescoped into the cab of the engine, pinned Womack by the legs. Coal piled all around him, hampering any efforts to escape. A boiler gauge pipe had broken and live steam at two hundred pounds of pressure poured onto his chest. The efforts of rescuers to throw mailbags between the engine and the pipe were futile, and he died almost instantly.

As mentioned earlier the wreck also cost the life of Charlie Gully of Staunton, who died as the mail car was demolished. Gully was serving as a railway postal clerk on the run from Washington to Cincinnati. His remains were taken from the scene and returned to Staunton for burial.

Several of the day coaches left the track, but did not overturn. Of the two hundred passengers aboard not one was seriously hurt. According to the Clifton Forge *Daily News*, the train was not traveling at excessive speed at the time of the wreck; the newspaper also stated "there was nothing left but scattered ties and twisted rails. Railroad men say that the wreck was one of the worst to happen in years."

"Dolly" Womack had been in the service of the C & O for about twenty-five years. He had been running on the passenger trains for some time and was regarded as a very careful, capable engineer and a man of supreme integrity. He was a brother of Ed Womack, the well-known Chesapeake and Ohio conductor. "Dolly" was fifty-two years old at the time of his death and a resident of Hinton, West Virginia. He had previously lived at Alderson.

Ron Lane wrote: "One wonders how history would have been altered had the westbound track not been blocked and Wo-

mack had been able to operate on this track rather than switch over to the defective eastbound track!"

The song about the wreck written by Meeks in 1927 shortly after he began working for the Norfolk and Western did not achieve the widespread fame of some of the other railroad ballads. Perhaps one of the reasons is that it is quite localized, including a dozen or so references to towns, tunnels, and so forth, which were of interest primarily to those who knew those places personally.

From Washington to Charlottesville, then Staunton on the line,  
Came the old midwestern limited, Train No. 5 on time.  
She was the Cincinnati train, the fastest on the line,  
Through the Valley of Virginia, into Clifton Forge on time.

The engineer at Clifton Forge, Dolly Womack was his name,  
Was there to sign the register and pull the speeding train;  
His fireman, Charlie Poteet, was standing by his side,  
And receiving their train orders, they climbed in the cab to ride.

Then Dolly to his fireman said: "Oh Charlie, well you know,  
For years I've been an engineer to ride the C & O;  
For many years I've had this run, just twenty-five in all,  
And when I blow for Covington, they will surely know my call."

From Covington to Jerry's Run Old No. 5 did roll,  
Through the Allegheny Tunnel, with a crew so brave and bold;  
Then westbound to the Mountain State, White Sulphur Springs on time,  
With orders to switch over there and take the east main line.

"I know my engine is all right, she's the U.S. Mountain kind—  
137, she will put us there on time."  
Said Dolly to his fireman: "We're running 'way behind,  
But when I pull the Big Bend Tunnel, I mean to be on time."

Just four miles further down the line, he hit a broken rail,  
No more to pull Old Number 5, no more to pull the mail.  
The engine did not overturn, but a steam pipe broke in two;  
Two hundred pounds of pressure killed poor Dolly brave and true.

Until the brakes release on time, life's throttle valve shut down,  
Someday he'll pilot in the crew that wears the Master's crown;  
With a clear block into Heaven's gate, he'll pull his mighty train,  
And there, in God's own roundhouse, he'll register his name.

#### "THE WRECK OF THE 1256"

"On a cold and dark cloudy evening," so begins the story in song about the wreck of Engine 1256 at Glen Wilton, Virginia,

on the night of January 3, 1925. A more accurate opening line could not have been penned, according to Sidney Dillard, fireman on the ill-fated freight that night. In an interview at his home in Clifton Forge in 1970, Dillard related his recollection of the severity of the weather on that evening back in the mid-twenties. Snow had fallen on the mountain city of Clifton Forge; the ground was frozen hard as the three crewmen took over the manifest freight for a trip down the James River line of the Chesapeake and Ohio.

The engineer was Sam Anderson; the head brakeman was Harry Lyle; the fireman, Dillard. A manifest freight was one carrying priority-type cargo and was accorded almost the same regard as a regular passenger train, insofar as physical circumstances would allow. The train pulled out of Clifton Forge around eight o'clock and made the short run to Iron Gate about one mile east, taking the siding there until train Number 9, a passenger unit from Richmond, had passed by.

Back on the main line once more and resuming virtually full speed, the long freight rounded a curve at a point slightly west of the community of Glen Wilton, Virginia. There were no warning devices on the James River run at that time: A slide had come down the mountainside from Alum Rock Bluff and covered the tracks. The engine and a large number of cars rolled over into the icy waters of the James River. Harry Lyle was killed instantly in the wreck. Engineer Anderson and Fireman Dillard managed to escape with relatively minor shake ups. In the 1970 interview Dillard related how several hoboes came to the aid of him and Anderson.

It was several weeks, as Dillard recalled, before the big engine and all of the cars could be extricated from the river. Special track had to be laid and the rescue of the equipment proved difficult and costly. However, Engine 1256 was restored to service and made many more runs on the tracks of the Chesapeake and Ohio, particularly on the "Mountain" run via Staunton and Charlottesville.

In all of the stories of railroad tragedy there seems to be a great deal of human interest and emotion tied up in them. In the case of the 1256, Harry Lyle, regarded as one of Clifton Forge's finest young men, was engaged to be married. In fact, the wedding was to have taken place just a week or so after the occurrence of the tragedy.

It is also interesting that another Harry Lyle, living at Cliftondale Park on the east side of Clifton Forge, was destined

later to be the engineer on that same tragedy-stricken 1256. On many occasions he pulled the Richmond-built K-3 on the run from Clifton Forge to Charlottesville and back. But he never climbed into that cab, he recalled, without a sad remembrance of the death it had brought to a man with the same name. As for kinship, it was fairly likely that the two were distant cousins.

It is not certain just who authored the song about the wreck. We do know that it came out on a Victor label about 1927 and was sung by the famous singer of such ballads, Vernon Dalhart. This ballad, like most of its companion pieces, ends up with the warning that life is short and that tragedy and heartbreak are a definite possibility in the lives of us all. Here is "The Wreck of the 1256":

On a cold and dark cloudy evening,  
Just before the close of the day,  
Climbed aboard Harry Lyle and Dillard,  
And with Anderson they rode away.

From old Clifton Forge they started,  
And their spirits were running high  
As they stopped at Iron Gate and waited  
Till Old Number Nine thundered by.

On the main line once more they started —  
Down that James River, so dark and drear,  
Without any thought of the danger  
Or the death that was lurking so near.

They were gay, and they joked with each other  
As they sped on their way, side by side;  
And the old engine rocked as she travelled  
Through the night on that last fatal ride.

In an instant the story was ended,  
On her side in that cold river bed.  
They found Harry Lyle in the cabin  
With a deep, fatal wound in his head.

Railroad men, you should all take a warning  
From the fate that befell this young man —  
Don't forget that the step is a short one  
From this earth to that sweet promised land.

#### "THE WRECK OF THE SPORTSMAN"

The exact date of The Sportsman's wreck is unknown, but it is believed that it happened in 1931. Factual information about the disaster is still somewhat scarce at this writing. We do know

that the accident occurred fairly soon after the inauguration of this famous train and that it took the lives of engineer Haskell and fireman Anderson. Scene of the wreck was just west of Hawk's Nest, deep in the rugged hill country of West Virginia.

The song was written by Bernard (Si) Coleman of Princeton, West Virginia, and Kyle Roop, also of that area. The song was recorded in Indiana in 1932, but as with a lot of others never made it to the railroad ballad hit parade.

Far away on the banks of New River  
While the deep shades of twilight hung low,  
In the mountains of old West Virginia,  
On the line of the C & O;  
Down the valley the old Forty-Seven  
Was winding her way 'long the stream.  
The drivers were rapidly pounding  
The engine was trembling with steam.

Haskell firmly held the throttle,  
Anderson's fire glowed with red,  
And they thought of no danger awaiting  
Down the line on a curve just ahead.  
In the dusk of a fair crimson sunset  
Near the path of the old Midland Trail,  
'Twas there that the fast-flying Sportsman  
Was wrecked as she swung from the rail.

'Twas there in the dark shades of twilight,  
While the bright crimson sky was aglow,  
That Haskell and Anderson of the Sportsman  
Gave their lives to the old C & O.  
Just west of the station called Hawk's Nest  
The engine turned over the fill;  
The boys were found near the river  
By the engine they loved, lying still.

That night there were loved ones waiting  
In Huntington for those boys—in vain,  
For God, the Supreme Crew Caller,  
Had called them for another train.  
The years full of tears may be many,  
And sad broken hearts ever burn,  
While they think of the "Wreck of the Sportsman,"  
And the loved ones who'll never return.

The songs and stories of rail disasters in Virginia and in particular along the tracks of the Chesapeake and Ohio are many. Because of space limitations I have covered but a few of the more famous ones. Several others should be mentioned, however, for

they deserve their own particular niche in the Chesapeake and Ohio ballad hall of fame.

Of course the mighty folk hero, John Henry, is a vital part of the history of the Chesapeake and Ohio; for while every section of the country claimed their own John Henry, there is conclusive evidence that this railway did, indeed, have its own worker and hero by this name. A great deal of research has been done in this century, especially since 1925, by competent researchers. Their unfolding evidence gives credence to the claim that John Henry matched his brawn and determination with the steam drill at the blasting out of the Great Bend (Big Bend) Tunnel at Talcott, West Virginia, back in the years 1871 to 1873. John Henry is perhaps the greatest folk hero in the long history of railroading in America.

There is also the intriguing story of the Guyandotte Bridge disaster in West Virginia on January 1, 1913. The undergirding of a trestle across the Guyan River gave way because of rampaging waters, and an engine and three cars dropped into the swollen river. Engineer Ed Webber and at least six other workmen were lost.

But perhaps the most fascinating — and almost the least known — story of Chesapeake and Ohio disasters concerns the Church Hill Tunnel cave-in in the city of Richmond in October 1925. The tunnel collapse literally buried an engine, ten cars of a work train, and an unknown number of workers. After exhaustive effort the engineer, Tom Mason, was removed from his buried engine, but the Chesapeake and Ohio deemed it too expensive to remove the entire crew and the train and decided to simply fill it in and cover it over. And so, to this day the engine and ten cars, plus a partial crew, lie beneath the asphalt in the capital city of Richmond. It is nothing short of amazing just how few Richmonders, even to this day, are aware of this tragic event.

Looking back across the ribbons of steel that are the railroad tracks of our nation, we can see a beautifully romantic story that blossomed in ultimate glory for so long a time and then, as the rails began to rust and sag, slipped into a place of secondary importance. None of us who know and love railroading can make any other attestation than that the railroading industry was the most glamorous, most romantic, and most fascinating of them all.

The days of steam railroading in America are virtually ended, but for those who knew that glorious time there will ever be pictured in our minds the unforgettable sight of a big steam en-



gine, huffing and puffing her way up a long grade, conquering the mountain, and emitting sounds of victory and conquest as she glides through the countryside to the regions beyond.

For every hour of tragedy and heartbreak, there were thousands of hours of joy and fulfillment. The men who worked the railroads, whether as engineers or engine wipers, had a love and dedication unmatched anywhere else. A peculiar breed of men they were — a breed of men who could forever be proud of their contribution to a better way of living for us all.

Yes, somebody has sidetracked our train; somebody has cooled the steam. But thank God, the memories are ours to keep till death takes each one of us to His great roundhouse in the sky.

## STAUNTON A GENERATION AGO

Joseph A. Waddell

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following comprises Chapter I, titled as above, of Mr. Waddell's *Home Scenes and Family Sketches* (Staunton, Va., 1900). Written during the Civil War and completed in 1864, the book describes the Staunton of an earlier era.

The famous Mr. Knickerbocker begins his history of New York at the creation of the world. Having such a precedent, I may venture to begin my book with an allusion to the origin of Staunton. The town was laid off in the year 1748, and was named in honor of Lady Gooch, wife of the colonial Governor. It was not incorporated, however, till November, 1761.—As all of my readers are presumed to be more or less acquainted with the town, I need not go further into its history. Nor shall I lay before them the statistics of its past or present population, trade, commerce and manufactures. But a brief account of matters and things about town, as they appeared to me rather more than a generation ago, may possess some interest.

During the days of my childhood, Staunton was decidedly a dilapidated village. Its narrow streets were excessively muddy in wet weather; some of the sidewalks were fenced in with posts and rails, to protect persons on foot from the encroachment of vehicles and cattle; the town authorities discouraged the planting of shade trees on the streets, and cut down a few which had grown up; the houses, public and private, were mean-looking; in a word, strangers always spoke of Staunton as a "very ugly town," and its own citizens had to confess that the place had no beauty to boast of. The courthouse was an unsightly stone structure (built or finished in 1755), surrounded by shabby brick buildings used as clerk's offices. The county jail, standing opposite the courthouse, compared with it in appearance. The town market-house was a large open shed on the corner of the jail lot. In the rear of the market-house stood the whipping-post and pillory. Augusta Street terminated abruptly a short distance south of the creek which runs back of the jail. The top of Gospel Hill was the eastern terminus of Beverley or Main Street. The road to Middlebrook diverged from the Buffalo Gap turnpike at a point near the present Cemetery, and the main Winchester road entered town over Gospel Hill.

In the course of time, the McAdamized turnpike leading to Winchester was constructed; water was conveyed from the country through the town in iron pipes; the Institution for the Deaf and Dumb and the Blind was erected; and finally, the Central Railroad was extended to Staunton. All these improvements as they successively occurred, gave a great impetus to the town; new streets were opened, old ones were graded, and sidewalks were paved; many new houses were built, old dwellings were repaired, and trees and shrubbery planted; so that after a while strangers began to remark that Staunton was "quite a pretty town," and the inhabitants complacently acquiesced in the opinion.

Staunton never had a "town Spring," but until a comparatively recent date most of the inhabitants obtained water for drinking and cooking from a half dozen public wells, four on Beverley Street and two on Augusta. The labor of carrying water from these wells to distant points, no doubt prevented the growth of the town for many years. Only three of the wells now remain, or at least they only have pumps in them. The pump at northwest corner of Beverley and Augusta Streets, which was the one nearest our house, was known in days of yore as "Hill's Pump." A large and surly old man, whose name originally was James Berryhill, but who chose in his later years to write it James B. Hill, kept a grocery, principally for the sale of whiskey, hard by, and took upon himself the office of Cerberus of the pump. Every urchin, black or white, that dallied at the pump when sent for water, was sure to be growled at, if not driven off, by "Old Berry Hill."

The different portions of nearly all towns are designated by particular names. London has its Southwark, Westminster, West End, &c., and Staunton from an early period had its Oldtown, Newtown, Gospel Hill and Gallowstown. The first is the lowest and oldest part of the town, and originally embraced all the hotels, stores and other places of business. As the town grew it extended westward, and thus Newtown arose. For many years there was a bitter feud between the boys of Newtown and Oldtown, and to call one a "Newtown tacky" was to bestow upon him a term of the utmost opprobrium.—Gospel Hill was so called from the fact that the negroes, many years ago, were in the habit of holding religious meetings in old Mr. Egan's wagonmaker's shop, which was situated on that hill. But the name Gallowstown excites the most curiosity in regard to its origin. Some seventy years ago, a man convicted of horse-stealing, and, in accordance

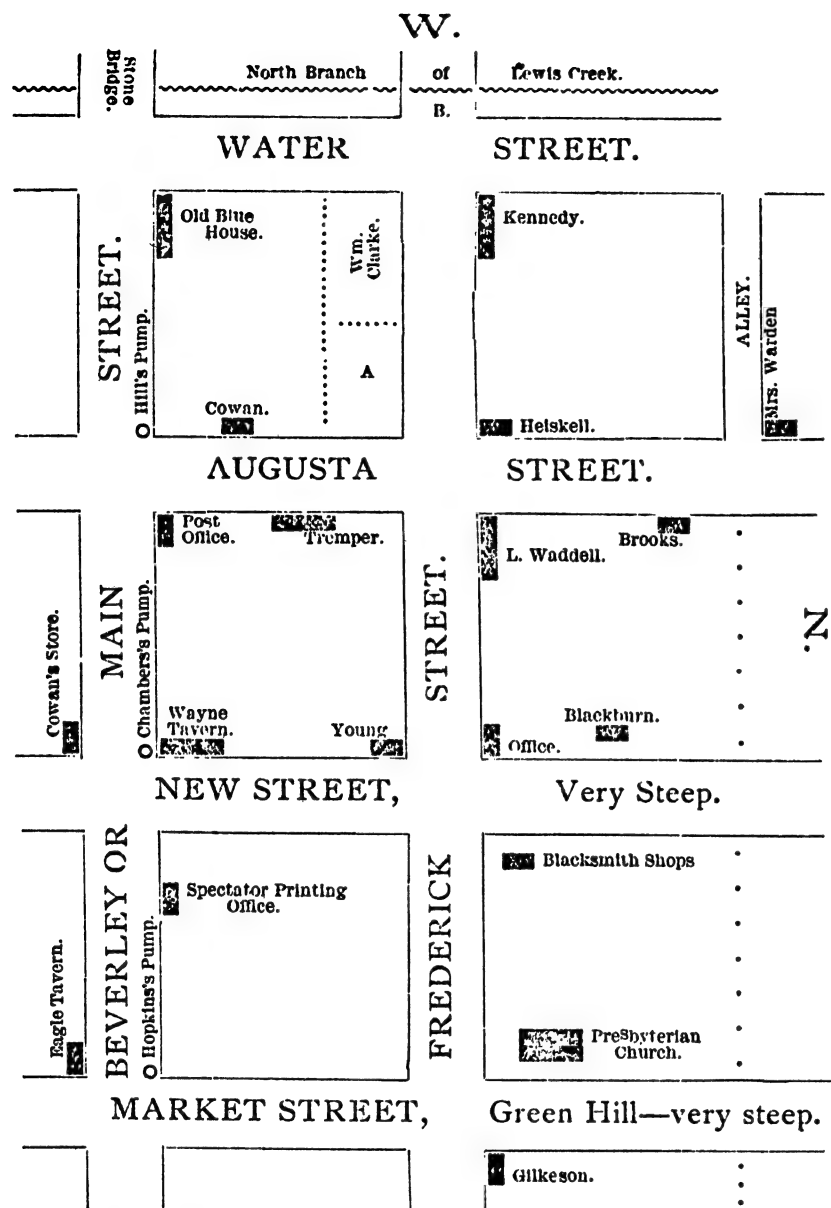
with the existing law, sentenced to be hung, was executed at the point where Augusta and New Streets meet. The log house belonging to the Gorden family was afterwards built on the site of the gallows, or near it, which at the time of the hanging was in the woods. The unfortunate man's name was Bullett. He was the "black sheep" of a most respectable family, of feeble intellect, and much sympathy was felt in his behalf. In the course of time houses were built out as far as the place where the gallows had stood, and all the northern part of the town soon acquired the name of Gallowstown. Children used to be told that if they would go to John Gorden's house and say: "John Bullett, what were you hung for?" he would say *nothing*. I remember to have done it when I was a child.

The old Episcopal church stood about the boundary line between Oldtown and Newtown, in the common burying ground of the town. It was the parish church during the time of the religious establishment, previous to the Revolution. Afterwards, the Presbyterians and Episcopalians worshipped in it on alternate Sundays, till the former built a house for themselves, in 1818. The old parish church was a small brick house, and was pulled down within my recollection. The Methodists here had a church of their own from an early date.

Mrs. Baldwin, my mother's early friend, gives a curious account of the origin of the present Episcopal church of Staunton, which I believe is true in its main features. I have heard my father give substantially the same account of the matter. Although now seventy-five years of age, Mrs. Baldwin is an inveterate joker, and relates with keen relish and inimitable style the ludicrous incidents of her life. It is sometimes difficult to tell whether she is serious or jesting, and therefore I have referred to my father as a corroborating witness.

As I have intimated, the Episcopal church had a legal existence here before the Revolution, being established by law throughout the Colony, and sundry "rectors" at different times had settlements in this section of country. But the church did not flourish, and after the support of the government was withdrawn, it went down entirely.

Early in the present century, however, several persons from Eastern Virginia settled in Staunton, who had been educated as Episcopalians and retained an hereditary attachment to the church of their fathers. Prominent amongst them was the late Mr. John Howe Peyton, distinguished as a lawyer, and also for relish-



A part of Staunton as it was in 1835. A is our lot. B the general watering place for horses and cows, open then, but long since bridged over. All the houses are not indicated.

From Joseph A. Waddell, *Home Scenes and Family Sketches* (Staunton, Va., 1900)

ing a practical joke almost as keenly as Mrs. Baldwin. At the same time there lived in Staunton an elderly man named William King, a cooper by trade, a zealous Methodist, and of unimpeachable character. He practiced medicine on a system peculiar to himself, and was called Doctor King. Mr. Peyton, partly in a spirit of fun, it is said, proposed to Dr. King to apply for orders in the Episcopal church. Furnished with a letter of recommendation signed by Mr. Peyton and several others, the Doctor proceeded to wait on Bishop Madison, and came back a regularly ordained minister. He immediately began to conduct service in the parish church, in accordance with the Episcopal forms; but for want of a leader, there were no responses from the congregation. Finally, however, Mrs. Chambers' German bar-keeper, at the Wayne tavern, who spoke very broken English, offered to officiate; and says Mrs. Baldwin, "we went to the church every other Sunday to hear Doctor King read the service, and the German bar-keeper make the responses."

From such an origin arose the present Episcopal church of Staunton, which has embraced in its fold many of the best people of the town.

Another explanation has been given of the motive of some citizens to seek and obtain the ordination of Dr. King, which is probably partly true. Several acres of land were granted by the original owner for an Episcopal church and grave yard, but when the church went down—there being no rector, organization, or services—the descendants of the grantor, or their creditors, claimed that the property had reverted and threatened to take possession of it. Dr. King was ordained, therefore, it is said, to keep up the show of an Episcopal church, and thus save the grave yard of the town from forfeiture and desecration.

Staunton must have been a famous place for taverns in former times. Rochefoucault, the French traveler, who visited the town in 1797, mentions incidentally that there were eight inns at the date of his visit. At a still earlier period there were doubtless more, as more were required. Augusta County was originally of indefinite extent westward, and the settlers on New River, the Kanawha, and the Ohio, came to Staunton to attend Court and barter their peltry for "store goods." I can remember only four taverns, however—the Wayne, the Washington, the Bell and the Eagle. The first, a large frame building which stood on the northwest corner of Beverley and New Streets, and much the more inviting in appearance, was burnt down in October, 1838. The

Washington had the reputation of being haunted.— According to the popular belief, a guest had been murdered in one of the chambers and his body thrown into the cave on Abney's Hill. His blood spilt on the floor, it was said, could never be washed out, and the murdered man, without his head, often appeared to unlucky guests who were put in the room to spend the night. It was not uncommon for travelers to stipulate before agreeing to stop at the tavern, that they should not be sent to that chamber. Several times the town was thrown into great excitement by the report that human remains had been found in the cave by adventurous boys. These discoveries probably gave rise to the report of a murder; but the remains found were doubtless thrown into the cave, after dissection, by Dr. Humphrey's medical students.— The cluster of houses forming the Washington tavern were finally pulled down to make room for the Virginia Hotel, which affords accommodations for more guests than a dozen of the olden time taverns.

George Geiger kept the Eagle tavern at intervals for many years. Upon giving up the house on one occasion, being in a mellow mood, he disposed of the tallow candles on hand by distributing them to the boys to illuminate the town. They were lighted after dark and set against the curbstones on both sides of Beverley Street from the Eagle to Newtown. In the midst of the sport a rush was made by some of Mr. Geiger's relations and their servants to gather up the candles, many of which were, however, grabbed by the boys and used as missiles for pelting the intruders. The Eagle was at the southwest corner of Beverley and Market Streets.

The Bell tavern, which was kept for many years by members of the Garber family, was at the southwest corner of New and Courthouse Streets. There was a spring in the basement from which persons in the neighborhood obtained water.

The Wayne tavern is always associated in my recollection of it with Indians, as they generally, when in town, congregated about that house. Previous to the removal of the Southern Indians west of the Mississippi river, Staunton was on the direct route from their country to Washington city, and delegations from different tribes often passed through town. They always came with bows and arrows, and the town people were in the habit of setting up copper cents for them to shoot at, the one who hit the cent being entitled to it. Among my earliest recollections is the circumstance of some of these Indians getting dinner at our

house, and of my afterwards carefully avoiding to eat with the knives and forks used by them. The poet Campbell, in a note to his "Gertrude of Wyoming," relates an incident illustrative of Indian character, which occurred at Staunton.

Another familiar sight in our streets thirty years ago, was the Knoxville teams, so called. At that time the merchants of East Tennessee transported their goods from Baltimore in wagons, and every Spring and Fall many of their lumbering wains passed through Staunton. The horses were decorated with bells, which made a great clatter, to the great delight of the children. As there were no other teams that used bells, we could always distinguish the Knoxville wagons from others. They generally started on the outward trip with loads of dried peaches and feathers, which were sold to the people on the road.—I remember well, when some feathers for beds were needed at home, that my father said, "Look out for a Knoxville wagon." What a Herculean undertaking it was to wagon goods from Baltimore to Knoxville, before the era of McAdamized roads or even graded "mud pikes!" The old time engineers constructed roads right over every hill in the way, however steep, and through every bog. To shorten distances was the all-important consideration with them, and they were slow to learn that a line around a hill is often as short as one over it. Over roads constructed by such engineers, the Knoxville merchants transported their goods. At some points on the route persons kept relays of strong horses to assist the teams over otherwise impassable places, and realized large sums from the fees paid for their services. After the extension of the James River Canal to Lynchburg, Knoxville teams were seen in Staunton no more.

About the same time there was a great tide of emigration from Eastern Virginia and North Carolina to Ohio. Forlorn looking people, with horses and carts to correspond, and a train of flax-headed children, frequently came along, and when asked where they were going, never failed to reply: "To the Ohio." But while the East was thus peopling the West, Ohio and especially Kentucky sent annually to the eastern markets immense droves of hogs. Every fall drove after drove came through Staunton, till it seemed that the eastern people must be surfeited with pork. Little carts drawn by little horses brought us sweet potatoes from Albemarle and Nelson counties and oysters from Fredericksburg.

Staunton was also a great thoroughfare for travelers going to and returning from the Virginia Springs. During the "Springs

season," the town was alive with stage coaches and the private carriages in which many wealthy people luxuriated. Some of the latter, as well as the former, were drawn by four horses, and occasionally there was quite a display of liveried servants. Stage coaches were formerly one of the institutions of Staunton. Shortly after my birth, Bawcett (pronounced Bocket), for many years a noted proprietor of the Winchester line, died, or retired from public life; but Belden, Porter and others flourished within my recollection. Bawcett and his immediate successors required nearly three days to make the trip from Staunton to Winchester. The western line extended from Staunton to Guyandotte on the Ohio river, by way of the White Sulphur Springs, Lewisburg, &c.; and furnished the only mode of public conveyance for travelers from nearly all parts of Virginia and portions of other States, to the Mississippi Valley. The coaches passed our door, and at the north end of town took the road leading through Jennings' Gap. They were always called "the Guyandotte stages." The other regular coaches were designated, as some still are, the Charlottesville, Lexington and Winchester.

The twin hills Betsy Bell and Mary Gray are the most conspicuous natural objects in the vicinity of Staunton. Boys of my age a generation ago considered it a great achievement to climb these hills. When a child, I firmly believed that they acquired their names from two young girls murdered on or near them in the early settlement of the country, by Indians. A tale giving a circumstantial account of the alleged tragedy, was published in a Northern periodical. It was, however, entirely fictitious. The names are of Scottish origin, and were brought to this country by early Scotch-Irish emigrants.

## A LOOK AT GIVEN NAMES IN THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY

Carroll Lisle

As older generations die off, the colorful and imaginative names they bore are passing into oblivion. Who now names an infant girl Artencha or Pernelia or Sigourney? Or names a boy Huggard or Iphus or Icie? Yet these names were ones used with some frequency in the mid-Shenandoah Valley and the mountains to the west. Perhaps because until recently this region has been fairly free from the influx of outsiders, the old names have clung as long as they have. There are, of course, multitudes of Johns and Elizabeths, but among them enough unusual names exist to warrant attention. It is such names that indicate something of the minds, the interests, the education or lack of it, and the creativity of those who did the naming.\*

Tucked away in their mountain valley, the parents of nineteenth-century children must have dreamed of faraway places. They named their daughters Venice, Seville, Roma, Odessa, Florence, and most particularly, Geneva. What a hold on the imagination Geneva has had! Countless women bore her name as such and in alternate forms influenced by local pronunciation, Generva and Jinerva. (If there is a Minerva, why not Jinerva?) Though Roma is feminine, Rome is masculine. Perhaps it is short for Jerome. For males Berlin and Denver are as popular as Geneva. These names persist; they have not died out. Dallas is almost as popular as Denver. Girls were once named for American cities too and states as well, but the feminine Peoria and Columbia, Missouri and Iowa, have faded. Of all the geographic names the one that has wielded the most influence is the Shenandoah Valley itself. The name Valley (possibly a nickname for Valeria or its more modern form, Valerie) is from the great Valley. And presumably the women named Crimora and Buena (pronounced Bew-na) Vista and simply Vista or Buna alone were named for the little towns in the Valley. These names are not unusual; they emerge sporadically.

To the flora of the region the namers must have looked. Their daughters were given, besides the ordinary flower names,

\*Sources for many of the names in this article are obituary notices in Shenandoah Valley newspapers.



ones of indigenous flowers: the nodding columbine, the spring-blooming primrose, the sweet-scented trailing arbutus, the shade-loving lobelia. Not garden flowers these, but lovely wild things. Simple folk with simple tastes and simple pleasures, they roamed the fields, the uplands, the forests. Many of the women were herbalists, familiar with the properties of the plants, and they named their daughters the names of the plants. Vervain and Verbena, Blossom and Clover were among them. One was called Gladiola; never mind that the name was mispronounced and thus misspelled. This was a plant introduced here from South Africa in the early nineteenth century. Unlike the brilliant hybrids of today, it was a delicate but winsome flower. And how did Cusickia come by her name? Hers was a unique name even in the eighteen hundreds. The native hyacinth, the camassia, has a form with the botanic name, *Camassia Cusickii*. Could it be the mother was familiar with this or was the surname *Cusick* part of her lineage? We cannot know.

Yet surnames did play a part in the naming of boys, and it still does. Sometimes there is no awareness on the part of the parents that the name was originally a surname. Certainly many of the male names in use today commenced as surnames. Though used as first names, Axton and Baxton, Ashford and Ashby were once surnames, surnames that arose from a place. The suffix gives the clue. *Ton* means town, *ford* the river ford, and *by* a settlement. Burleigh and Burgard, a corruption of Beauregard, were originally surnames. Used now as first names are Chaney and its earlier spelling Cheyne. Pronunciation has altered Derwood so that its variations include Darwood and Durwood and Deward. There are Dabneys and Dahleys and Dilmans, Lathans and Lurtys. Unless we personally know the names we cannot know whether a Woodrow, for example, was named patronymically or for a person or renown.

We have seen in our own times that public figures are apt to have baby namesakes. Neil Armstrong, Dwight Eisenhower, and John Kennedy have been so honored. In our own backgrounds we can often find a little Jeff Davis or Grover Cleveland or Andrew Jackson. In the midsection of the Shenandoah Valley one local hero takes precedence for namesakes: Turner Ashby. The swash-buckling young Civil War leader was killed in a skirmish not far from Harrisonburg in 1863; his name recurs even yet. President Woodrow Wilson was born in Staunton in 1856. Babies born at the time of his presidency bear his name.

Not merely do the names of local historical figures appear. The great astronomer William Herschel who discovered the planet Uranus and two satellites of Saturn and his remarkable astronomer sister, Caroline, had their name remembered long generations after their deaths in the nineteenth century. Germans, they went to Hanoverian England and were extolled in both countries. The name of the famous Seminole Indian who gave the Indians a written language has been borne by both men and women. It is not always spelled the same but it is recognizable even as Ocie Ola, Oceola, Oseola. Just how this name came to be widely familiar among the region's citizenry more than a century ago is puzzling. Possibly the name became a household word as a brand name for a type of tobacco or a spool of thread. Perhaps his story was included in a school textbook.

Spellings of names give us an indication of how the parents pronounced them. Dorcas was as often spelled Darcus. Alesia and Alesha were Alicia; Trecia was short for Patricia, Seybenna for Sabina. Tressa seems to be the nickname for Theresa or Teresa as it now is more commonly spelled. The *h* in that name is silent as it is in Thomas and once was in Anthony. The name Esther in the Shenandoah region was frequently spelled Easter, but not pronounced the same as the holy day; instead, the diphthong *ea* is the same as in *bread*. Mirel and Murrel are Merle or Merrill. Possibly Ulas is Ulysses. Cloud may be Claude, and Clota and Cloda its feminine counterpart. Alston is Austin in disguise. Reine and LaReine, French for queen—an alternative rendering is Luraney, and Raney is even more prevalent—are spellings that persist here and seem to be the clue to the origin of Larraine in its variety of spellings, for the pronunciation is the same.

In the decade of the 1960's and carrying on into the seventies, the feminine name Tracy is enjoying a widespread revival. It is not a new name, but one that underwent a lull in popularity. Like many another name it was originally a nickname, a pet name, a diminutive. Like Tess, Tracy is a nickname for Teresa. Given the German background of many of the Valley people and the German pronunciation of the name, it is relatively easy to see how Tracy evolved. Just as Lisa and Larry are now considered names by themselves rather than nicknames that they once were, so in this region Lon and Guernsey are given as names in their own right. Lon was short for Biblical Elon or Alonzo, which in the nineteenth century was more common than now. Extremely popular in this mountain valley was the feminine name

Sigourney, the origin of which is unknown. It has given rise to a spate of Guerneys, Gernons, Gurnteys, and Gerneys. Nealie must have been Cornelia or Pernelia. Fronie is short for two names, both of which enjoyed a popularity they do not have today: Euphronia and Sophronia. Lottie and Ottie apparently are the short forms for the German Carlotta or our more familiar Charlotte. And the ubiquitous Villa may be a short form for Arvilla or Sevilla.

Celia is an old name. Written in the sixteen hundreds, Ben Jonson's "Drink to me Only With Thine Eyes" was addressed to Celia. But in the Shenandoah Valley of the eighteen hundreds there were Francelia, Hercelia, Jocelia, Marcellia, and Roszelia. What happened to these names that they are so forgotten?

Of all the letters of the alphabet the *L*, the soft *l*, the liquid *l*, seemed to lure the name creators. Listen! Laurenia, Lairleen, Lavania, Louvada, Leurrenna, Lydora, Lavillon for lasses; Lanzy and Lyniel, Leasure and Lathan, and Lilbren for lads. The namers liked the end of the alphabet too. There are Vanyla, Vhonda, Virenda, Vinda, Verlie, Vieva, and Wyonia, Willetta, and Yildis, all feminine names. Virgus, Vestyl, Vinceon, and Vanis are masculine. The letter *Z* yields in part these feminine names: Zoma, Zorphia, Zorfa, Zola, Zeptie, Zelda, Zaida, and Zumar. If name books such as parents today often consult existed a century or more ago, none is extant. It seems likely that those who did the naming — parents or grandparents or godparents — were on their own.

At least one dictionary published in the nineteenth century — *Webster's Primary School Dictionary* (1880) — contained a brief list of Christian names drawn primarily from the Bible. But the Bible itself, rather than a dictionary name list, was probably the source for many of the first names. Of mostly German and Scotch-Irish background the Valley people were Bible readers, so the given names of the older generations were not surprisingly Biblical. Besides the familiar Old Testament names, the unfamiliar ones were used. Cleophas, Ephraim, Haran, Jehu, and Irad are examples. The female name Ruhamah was prevalent enough here and spelled variously Ruhama, Rhuhamie, Ruehama, and Ruhemia. In the middle of the nineteenth century the name Jerusha, also spelled Jeruchia, had a popularity that spread beyond the Valley, as did Mahala.

One wonders why the name of a man doomed by the Lord should be selected for a new baby. There was many a young son

named Anias or Annias. But in other cases, the meanings of the names or the characters of the Biblical personages must have been considered. There were boys named Nahum and Jairus and girls named Rizpah and Tirzah.

Faith, Hope, and Charity had long been standard names. To that category the Valley people added Council, Bliss, Reason, Wealthy, and Halcyon. Strange to our ears, the names are just a step removed from the Hatevil and Lovegod of the seventeenth-century Puritans. And at least one set of parents bestowed Adeste-fidelis upon their daughter!

It is evident that the Valley dwellers were not averse to creating their own names. Fathers or men in the family were honored by having their daughters named after them. These are not such unusual feminine counterparts as Alberta, Claudia and Harriet. These are original. The names are not prevalent and may be one of a kind. Otto became Ottolene, Pierce became Piersna, Basil became Basilisa and Reuben, Reuvenna. Cleta, however, like its masculine form Cletus is frequently heard.

Others of the regional names apparently are fabricated. Metta seems to have been a contraction of the mother's name which was Marietta. Sometimes two names are joined uniquely as Mareva or Mazalene, Vernabel or Verbanel, Avanel or Evadell, or Jillayn. Analogy operates in some cases. If there is a Mildred, why not Hildred; if there is Cassandra, why not Joandra; if there is Merlin and Berlin, why not Verlin? If there is Bernice, why not Vernice?

What bursts of patriotism caused the parents to bestow Liberty, Columbia, America, and Capitola on their daughters? Without regard to meaning, names were given children that could cause embarrassment, such as Sterile, Serum, Return, Ferel, and Hurdle. *Donna* in Italian is simply a title of respect as Mrs. is, but that does not deter its popularity in twentieth-century America. In the Shenandoah Valley of the nineteenth century Senora, not pronounced in the Spanish way, and Matrona were used as feminine names, as Signor was used as a masculine one. We can imagine the wonderment and tenderness toward the newborn that manifested itself in such names as Fairy, Fawn, and Dimple, but we commiserate with those so named.

Partly, but only partly, the names were a product of their times. The Victorian Age was a flamboyant one attested to by its architecture and interiors, by its florid letters and lectures, by the excesses of hoop skirts and bustles, by its Phineas T. Barnums. In

general, it was a confident, forward-looking time. Technological changes speeded up life's pace. Some of this hightide necessarily found its way to the Valley backwater, where its currents were primarily older flows in which changes do inexorably occur, but slowly. To an extent then new names were introduced, but the old still clung. More importantly, the methods of naming did cling so that even in our own twentieth century there remains the tendency to use namesakes and to create names imaginatively.

## DECLARATIONS OF INTENTION TO BECOME UNITED STATES CITIZENS

This list of declarations of intention to become United States citizens has been compiled by Mrs. William Bushman from original forms in Augusta County Court Records, File 950, Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of Augusta County, Staunton, Virginia.

In this connection, it is interesting to note the following order of the Augusta County Court at November term, 1764, nearly a century earlier:

Jacob Peterson having produced a Certificate of his having received the Sacrament and having taken the Usual Oaths to his Majesty's person and Government Subscribed the Abjuration Oath and Test which is on his Motion Ordered to be Certified in Order to his Obtaining Letters of Naturalization [Augusta County Court Records, Order Book No. IX, 161].

	Name	Origin	Declaration	Age
1844 27 May	John Short	Ireland	Augusta County	
1851				
21 November	Robert Night	Ireland	Augusta County	
23 December	Thomas Barrett	Ireland	Augusta County	
26 December	Timothy Ryan	Ireland	Augusta County	
1852				
26 January	Henry George	Hesse-Cassel	Augusta County	
5 April	Dennis Boleyn	Ireland	Augusta County	
4 May	Thomas Cothran	Ireland	Augusta County	
18 May	Charles Dailey (Dilay)	Ireland	New York City	
21 July	John Kinney	Ireland	Augusta County	
21 July	Morris Conner	Ireland	Augusta County	
10 June	Thomas Scantlin	Ireland	Augusta County	23
28 July	John Markum	Ireland	Augusta County	
2 November	Timothy Crohin	Ireland	Augusta County	
3 November	John Murphy	Ireland	Augusta County	25
11 November	Patrick Laden	Ireland	Augusta County	
22 November	Henry Faust	Hesse-Darmstadt	Augusta County	
1853				
6 January	August Grubert	Prussia	Augusta County	32
6 February	Charles McCarty	Ireland	Augusta County	
21 February	Callahan McCarty	Ireland	Warren County, Va.	
23 February	Timothy Dailey	Ireland	Augusta County	



John Croghan's

Age

1860 October 27  
remains character  
proved & admitted a  
citizen.

# UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

State of New York Steuben County  
I, John Croghan of County in said County  
formerly of County Clare in Ireland

DO DECLARE, on oath, that it is bona fide my intention, and has been for the last three years, to become A CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES, and to renounce FOREVER all allegiance and fidelity to ALL and EVERY For-

cign Prince, Potentate, State and Sovereignty, whatever; and particularly to Victoria Queen  
of Great Britain & Ireland

Sworn in open Court this 22 day

of 1854 before me,

John Croghan

STATE OF NEW-YORK,  
Steuben County Clerk's Office, ss.

I, CHARLES W. CAMPBELL, Clerk of the Courts of said County, being  
Courts of Record having common law jurisdiction and a Clerk and Seal, do certify that the above is a true copy of the  
original declaration of intention of John Croghan to become a citizen of  
the United States, remaining on record in my office.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed the seal of the said

Courts the 22 day of June one thousand eight hundred

and fifty.

C. W. Campbell Clerk,

John Croghan's Declaration of Intention, June 22, 1854.  
From Augusta County Court Records, File 950

5 April	John Stalmire	Wurtemberg	Augusta County	
23 April	John Cronnice	Ireland	Augusta County	
25 April	John George	Hesse-Cassel	Augusta County	28
7 May	Timothy Sullivan	Ireland	Augusta County	23
17 May	Michael Hurley	Ireland	Augusta County	
23 May	Dennis Donnavan	Ireland	Augusta County	
28 July	Henry Goil (Gole)	Hesse-Darmstadt	Augusta County	
19 September	Thomas Haden	Ireland	Augusta County	

1854				
2 January	Edward Stockert	Saxony	U. S. Court, Eastern Virginia	
14 March	James Murphy	Ireland	Augusta County	
24 May	Martin Nayland	Ireland	Augusta County	
7 June	Michael Crehman	Ireland	Augusta County	35
22 June	John Croghan, County Clare, Ireland		Steuben County, New York	
	Citizenship granted October Court, 1860			

28 August	George Frederick Baker	Hesse-Darmstadt	Augusta County	
28 September	William Caughlin	Ireland	Augusta County	
2 October	John McMahan	Ireland	Augusta County	
14 October	James Moran	Ireland	Augusta County	
11 October	Henry Frederick	Wurtemberg	District of Maryland, Baltimore	
	Residing in Baltimore			
30 December	Samuel Hayward	England	Augusta County	

1855				
6 February	Frederick Hanser	Wurtemberg	Augusta County	
10 February	John Calman	Ireland	Augusta County	23
3 March	Thomas Shelley	Ireland	Augusta County	
9 March	William Ryan	Ireland	Greenbrier County, Va.,	35
27 March	Daniel Murphey	Ireland	Augusta County	28
			(Fee \$1.88)	

7 April	Jeremiah Twohay (Toohey)	Ireland	Augusta County	
2 April	Frank Pruefer	Saxony	City of Staunton	34
16 April	Jeremiah Largney	Ireland	Augusta County	30
16 April	Michael Ryan	Ireland	Augusta County	
21 April	Timothy Bowen	Ireland	Augusta County	
23 April	Jeremiah Farisee	Ireland	Augusta County	23
23 April	John Finn	Ireland	Augusta County	
23 April	Patrick Sullivan	Ireland	Augusta County	
23 April	Dennis Murphry	Ireland	Augusta County	
23 April	John Lary	Ireland	Augusta County	28
23 April	Patrick Connell	Ireland	Augusta County	
28 April	Timothy Driscoll	Ireland	Augusta County	
28 April	John Fitzgerald	Ireland	Augusta County	
28 April	Joseph Strack	Prussia	Augusta County	27
1 May	Francis Schuetz	Baden	Augusta County	
16 May	Clemn Engesser	Baden	Augusta County	
17 May	Timothy McCarty	Ireland	Augusta County	
17 May	John Rhan	Ireland	Augusta County	
19 May	Dennis Caldon	Ireland	Augusta County	32
22 May	James Griss (Grip?)	Ireland	Augusta County	

25 May	Augustus Weaver	Bavaria	Augusta County	23
28 May	Anthony Markle	Switzerland	Augusta County	42
29 June	Timothy Coffey	Ireland	Augusta County	
14 July	William Kidney (Kidway?)	Ireland	Augusta County	57
27 September	Andrew Kennedy	Ireland	Augusta County	
16 November	John B. Antone	Corsica	Augusta County	23
1856				
25 February	John M. Eidebens	Hesse-Darmstadt	Augusta County	
24 March	Michael Dineen	Ireland	Augusta County	28
3 May	Phillip Brailly	France	Augusta County	24
16 May	Edward Shee	Ireland	Augusta County	
26 May	John Carmody	Ireland	City of Staunton	
1857				
5 January	John R. Schmitt	Bavaria	Augusta County	
24 September	John Connell	Ireland	Alleghany County, Va.	
1858				
9 July	Samuel Guggenheim	Baden	Augusta County	
1859				
18 June	James Long	Ireland	City of Staunton	

## OLD HOMES OF AUGUSTA COUNTY

### Part III

Katherine G. Bushman  
Chairman, Landmark Project

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is the narration which accompanied a slide presentation of Part III of the Landmark Project series at the Society's spring 1973 meeting.

No program of this type can be produced without greatly valued help. That assistance was given to us by our talented photographers who traveled many miles and spent many hours taking pictures. We are indeed fortunate to have such people to aid us.

I would like to have you meet those who are with us tonight: George Yarrow and his able assistant, Mrs. Yarrow; W. H. Payne and Roy Sheets, who comprise another team of our photographers; and John McChesney, Jr. Others who contributed pictures to this presentation are all three Bushman sons, who could not be present. We appreciate more than words can say this expression of your talents.

Credit for manuscript material is due Mrs. Yarrow, Mrs. Silva E. Clem. Mr. McChesney, and your chairman of this project.

Finally and most importantly, our deep appreciation goes to the owners of the houses shown here tonight — without your generous hospitality extended to all of us, there would be no program. We do thank you.

We begin the third armchair tour of Augusta County's old homes by traveling east on Interstate 64 from Staunton to the Fishersville exit. As we draw near the exit the site of Augusta Expo is to the right. Please imagine that you were there in November 1972 — six months ago — for these photographs show the old Coiner home as it was prior to the decision, reluctantly made, to demolish the most interesting old house.

The house was a wonderful example of the expansion of an original structure. The log center portion was constructed possi-

bly in the late eighteenth century. It still contained much of its early exterior and interior trim. This included vertical board partitions, wide flooring, and paneled doors. The north wing of brick, added probably about 1810-1820, contained fine masonry details including a carefully fitted limestone foundation, front wall laid in Flemish bond, exterior end chimney, and a well-executed, molded brick cornice of the Valley type.

The south wing, also of brick and added later, was laid in American bond and incorporated the original stone chimney of the log selection. The lean-to addition on the rear of the log section featured a three-course, hound's tooth brick cornice.

Leaving Expo, we travel north on Route 608 past Tinkling Spring Church—now on the Virginia Landmarks Register and the National Register of Historic Places — to Fishersville and the old road to the home of Mrs. E. Kiblinger. Discovered in the attic there was an old sign belonging to former days in Augusta — the Augusta House Tavern sign. We are indebted to John McChesney, Jr. for the interesting pictures taken here.

Still keeping to Route 608 north from Fishersville we arrive at Spring Valley. The brick in this substantial home was made on the premises by slaves about 1850. The property has its original acreage (425). Bought by a Mr. Zirkle during the Civil War, it was paid for with Confederate money. Later it was owned by George Coyner, who left it to his daughter Mrs. James R. Kemper. In 1940 John Loving purchased the house from the Kemper estate.

James Kemper in his later years was president of the Telephone Company of Virginia. When he had lived at this farm in his younger days there was a private telephone company — Long Meadow Telephone Company — owned by about fifteen residents of the area. Later, when the Chesapeake and Potomac Telephone Company took over the right of way, pin rights were established and, connected with the switchboard in Staunton, are still in operation. Rent for the use of these rights were paid by the private company. Mrs. John Loving was treasurer for about fifteen years and collected bills every six months. An old telephone made by Western Electric is in existence.

The Kemper-Loving house has twelve rooms, two of which have been converted into baths. Each room had a fireplace with a handdressed white pine mantel. From one end of the kitchen a

steep stairway ascends to a small room which originally had no other connection with the rest of the house. It was used as a schoolroom.

The old wooden front porch was rebuilt with a concrete floor and flagstones. The long side porch had a primitive bath at one end with a wooden tub lined with copper. Over the lathes in this room was found an 1854 *Richmond Dispatch*. This side porch is now a pleasant glass-enclosed sun porch. A parlor, now a downstairs bedroom, had several murals which unfortunately were ruined by nearby blasting. (Itinerant painters left many decorated rooms as they traveled the countryside.)

Other buildings on the Loving's property include two small log cabins and a spring house.

North on Route 608 is Long Meadows (the Curry Carter home). This house, owned now by Mr. and Mrs. Corbin Dixon, is considered one of the oldest in the Valley. The builder is not known. Originally a farm of 405 acres, today it consists of 180 acres.

Close to the small original home were two log cabins for housing slaves and two other wooden structures, one the spring house. The small home had two rooms on the first floor and two rooms above. A large brick house was later added to this early structure. Written on the back of a door in the attic are the words: "Sandy Hall McCue, 1869." The outside doors have iron hinges entirely across each door.

Previous to the purchase of the house by Mr. Dixon the walk-in fireplace was enclosed and the others were bricked in. Except for a modern kitchen the antiquity of the house has been retained and the restoration is authentic. Two iron tie bolts high on the ceiling in the living room indicate how the porch was attached. The windows have six panes in the upper sash and nine in the lower and have some original glass. The Dixon family has interesting antique china and pictures which belonged to great-grandparents.

Staying on Route 608, we see on a rise to the left the historic home of Mr. and Mrs. John Grove — Old Stone Fort.

It is one of the oldest homes in the county and is most unusual in construction. The original portion with a unique tiered or stepped chimney was built either by William Johnston who came to Augusta County in the 1730's or by his son Zechariah

Johnston. There is evidence that it was indeed intended for a fort because of the small head-high windows on the first floor. Grayson Grove and the late Percy G. Hanger have related that huge seven-foot rocks were excavated in the wall when cutting a door between rooms and also when lowering window openings to normal size. Still in evidence are the wooden shingles which were pegged into place originally; then as they wore down they were taken up, turned over, and replaced with hand-made nails. The paneling in the parlor also shows the pegs used to secure it.

The rooms downstairs are of smaller dimensions than those upstairs, since the stone walls taper and vary from twenty-seven to forty-eight inches. The tiered or stepped chimney is one-half outside and one-half inside. The wing on the right was added one hundred years after the stone portion was built, and the pillared gallery at a still later date.

Zechariah Johnston, the only heir of William Johnston, was an outstanding leader of Augusta County and the Valley. He was a captain in the Revolution — serving in the militia — and a member of the General Assembly in 1778. In 1785 he was chairman of the Assembly's Committee on Religion and played a major role in securing passage of James Madison's bill for religious freedom in Virginia. Three years later Johnston was significantly involved in Virginia's ratification of the Federal Constitution. In 1792 he sold this home to Reverend John McCue, pastor of Tinkling Spring Church, and until his death in 1800 lived at Providence Hill, the house he built near Lexington.

Two miles north of New Hope on Route 608 is Battle Glen Farm, home of Mr. and Mrs. John S. Shumake. It was built in 1859 by C. G. Shaver, grandfather of Mr. Shumake, who came to Augusta County in 1837; the land was purchased from the Bell family. Mr. Shaver's father was a Hessian soldier who lived at Maurertown in Shenandoah County.

During the Civil War battle of Piedmont this home was the headquarters of General Hunter of the Union Army; among other officers present there was William McKinley, later President of the United States.

Many of the original rose-tinted window panes are still in the windows.

Coming south on Route 608 to New Hope we stop at the home of Mrs. Isabelle K. Morris, known as the Wilberger home.

It was built before 1847 and was then known as Dickenson Tavern. It was used as a hospital during the battle of Piedmont.

In New Hope also is the home of Dr. Obenschain and this was used as a hospital during the battle of Piedmont.

Just west of New Hope on Route 616 is the restored brick house of the A. J. Mehler family.

Off the New Hope road at Middle River we see the home of the Lindseys of Harrisonburg. Information about this was unobtainable — there were very efficient guards about in the form of German Shepherds.

On Route 682 north of 612 we come to the Gideon Barnhart home. Today this is owned by J. I. Hagwood. In 1844 the original house — two log-pen buildings — was purchased by Gideon Barnhart from Enos Wampler. In 1845 he brought here his bride, Martha Ann Weade, where they lived almost half a century. Mr. Barnhart remodeled the original log-pen houses in 1851 by enlarging and roofing them together much as the building appears today. During the battle of Piedmont it too was used as a hospital.

On Route 612 south of Round Hill on Middle River is the A. D. Cullen house, owned now by a Mr. Palmer of Middlebrook. This is a very old house and was probably the original home of the Barnhart family.

On Route 256 just west of South River is Riverside, the Abraham Mohler home. Today this is the residence of Lyall Steger. The house was built about the 1850's and has also been used as a guide house and a hotel.

Coming back to the Middle River area north of Quick's Mill on Route 742, we arrive first at the home of Mrs. Billy Stowers. Known as the Sheets place, it was built by a Mr. Patterson about the early 1850's and was restored in 1972. The building is Georgian in style. Mr. Payne has photographed several interior features such as the mantels and furnishings, including an 1870 high chair and John Rodgers sculpture owned by Mrs. Stowers.

Located on Middle River north of Quick's Mill is Hamrick's Camp. Constructed about 1840, it was the home of the miller for

the Hulvey Mill which washed away in the 1880's. It was purchased by Mrs. Clara Hamrick in 1921 and has been in the Hamrick family since. The house was built of logs and in two sections, the east end being the newest, and is clapboarded over. The only restoration has been essential work because of damage caused by termites, rotting logs, and other problems. The building was sketchily electrified in 1937 when REA came through. At present there is water in the kitchen; an outside bathhouse was moved from Market Street where the Mary Baldwin campus is now located and is again in use.

Also in this area and across Middle River is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Partlow, Jr. Standing on land granted to John Poage in 1787, the house was built by James Jordan in 1857. It is also referred to as the Cline home. A smokehouse on the place was built at the same time as the house; and the barn, about 1900.

The crossroads known today as Quick's Mill was before 1900 called Mowry's Mill, which was located on Falling Spring Branch. Today this is the home of S. Walter Link and has been the home of the Link family since the early 1900's following the decease of Rebecca Humbert Mowry Rife.

The house was constructed about 1830 by Lewis Mowry, Jr. and it is said that only the first floor was finished when the family occupied it. The brick was made on the place; there is a heavy stone foundation; and the plaster shows that it was made with hog bristles. The interior doors of the crusader type still have the original paint and hardware; the flooring is wide pine. The kitchen has still its eight-foot fireplace with hooks for cooking.

The front rooms of the house are all sixteen feet by twenty feet in size, and there is a beautiful open stairway from the first floor to the attic.

From Quick's Mill we travel east through Verona on Route 612 to Middle River and the home of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Landrum, known since the very early days of Augusta County as the Kerr home.

Locating at the meeting of Christian's Creek, Long Meadow Run, and Middle River, James Kerr, the progenitor of the family, built his home on a high bank. Built on solid rock, it is in excellent state of preservation and was constructed of carefully se-

lected logs, none of which is less than ten inches in thickness. The massive chimney has two fireplaces; that on the west side contains an oven evidently for the kitchen. A six-foot back log could be burned in either fireplace.

Features which indicate the antiquity of the house are double-thick outside doors, hand-pegged peep hole windows upstairs, and two enclosed and steep stairs behind miniature crusader doors. The stairs lead to several upper rooms around the thick stone chimney. The house still has original flooring and exposed ceiling beams of random width.

It was on the Kerr farm that William McCue found the original Beverley Manor marker which stands today on the lawn of the Augusta County Courthouse.

Taking Route 11 south through Verona to the by-pass, we turn onto Route 254. One mile east of Route 11 and across the road from the site of the John Lewis home, we come to an old red brick house. The building stands on land owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia where the lime plant was located. It was purchased at auction, May 12, 1973 by Robert Fitzgerald of Waynesboro.

A check of Augusta County deed books shows that in 1894 T. C. Elder and William Patrick, trustees for the Staunton Development Company, sold the land to John Kroder of New York and that in 1890 Elizabeth V. Harman, widow of Major John A. Harman, had conveyed three hundred acres of what was known as Belle Font farm to the Staunton Development Company.

Earlier records show that Major Harman had acquired the land in 1854 from Michael G. Harman, who in turn had purchased it from Chapman Johnson, surviving trustee under an 1840 deed of trust from David W. Patteson and Ann B., his wife. The latter was the former Ann McCullough, daughter of Robert McCullough whose property was partitioned beginning in 1817. McCullough had acquired the land from Andrew Lewis of Montgomery County, Virginia, in 1793. This consisted of 925 acres on Lewis Creek, one tract of which was of 740 acres and the other—the Stone House tract—of 185 acres, all originally part of the land of John Lewis.

Traveling west from Staunton on Route 250 past Lone Fountain to Route 736, we drive about a mile north to the farmhouse built about 1865 by Robert Dinkle of Bridgewater. The brick used in construction was made across the road. The house has



unusual trim on the outside. The basement contains the original kitchen and dining room. The flooring is of wide pine with no sub-flooring. Very wide closets in the bedrooms are only a few inches deep. There are three full hallways from front to back. Evidence of a summer kitchen remains on the north side of the house.

Until 1972 this was the home of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Siron.

Coming back to Route 250 east we arrive at the home of Mrs. E. A. Lawrence—Turtle Lane. Purchased in 1962 from Mr. and Mrs. D. Lynn Churchwell, the land on which the house stands has been in the possession of nine owners. In 1767 a patent was issued to William Christall on Jennings Creek; in 1773 he conveyed the grant of 320 acres to his daughters and their husbands. In turn they sold the property to James Campbell and the latter to Francis Hoff (Huff) in 1781. From then until 1923 the property remained in the Huff family. S. L. Masincup, who purchased it from Silas L. Huff, sold it in 1941 to D. Lynn Churchwell.

The original kitchen has beamed ceilings and formerly a glazed cooking dome in the fireplace. The walls are four bricks deep on the first floor and three bricks deep on the second. The outer doors—both front and back—are original and have original locks. The back door is diagonal and the front, a Christian cross. A most interesting feature is what is known as a Hessian beam, which stands as a brace from cellar to attic and is supposedly placed in the direction of the prevailing wind.

All paneling is original, including hand-planed ceiling paneling. The floors upstairs are original, and the master bedroom has tongue and groove paneling. Initially the house had two rooms up and two down. Over the kitchen is a fascinating small bedroom reached by a narrow stair and called the Crows Nest. Completing our tour of the house are excellent pictures of the cellar, showing the log beams, and of the outside storage house and smoke house.

Today the entrance to the house is through what was the back door. The front of the house shows that at one time there was an upstairs gallery entered from a door long ago bricked up.

On Route 1, Swoope, is Pleasant Hills. The original land grant was two thousand acres—Hebron Church is on part of the property—and it is now reduced to two hundred acres. R. P. Brown, Jr. recalls seeing the original parchment grant with the

signature of the Governor of Virginia, but this is now missing.

The front part of the house was built about 1792. The ell in back was added about 1910. A log cabin used by slaves stands near the house. The porch has been enlarged and the roof shingles replaced with tin.

The Brown family have been the only owners of the land. Today the house is being rented.

On Route 703 beyond Hebron Church is Steinhaus Farm. One of the rare Hessian houses, this was built about 1779. The property has 450 acres now leased to cattle raisers. When the house was purchased by George Engle, vice president of Greyhound, the interior was completely stripped and re-done. Except for the living room fireplace all others were closed up. The ceilings were dropped six to eight inches; windows were cut through at the second floor level. The original staircase which went directly to the attic was removed and a new one constructed in a different location—the center hall. Early records concerning this land are in the Orange County Clerk's Office.

In the basement were the slave quarters. On the first floor are three rooms with a half bath added and on the second floor, three bedrooms and two baths. In 1961 Frank Femyer, an executive with a national tea company, purchased the property and has since rented it to Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Gross. The complete set of pheasant pictures (Gibson series) which hang in the living room has considerable interest and value. (One slide shows the thickness of the walls of the house.)

On Route 695 north of St. John's Church is the Old Poor Farm. This is the home today of Mr. and Mrs. Peyton Fix. It was probably built in the late 1700's or early 1800's. It was purchased by Katherine Ramsey Fix's father from the Augusta County Board of Supervisors when the county home was relocated near Waynesboro in 1929. The county had owned the property for one hundred years.

The large house was occupied by the superintendent; smaller cabins, by the residents of the poor farm. (Of the latter only one partially complete cabin remains, which has two double and four single residential rooms.)

Brick was made on the premises. The two chimneys of the superintendent's house are different; one is flush with the house, the other enclosed. Four tiny windows are in the attic. The back

of the house is the oldest part. When an addition was put on the front it was a higher level and there were three steps connecting. These were later eliminated when the original structure was lowered. This change can be seen in the cellar wall as well as in the low kitchen window. Side porches were added when Mr. Ramsey bought the home.

The farm of 266 acres is gravity fed from springs, and Mill Creek runs through the property.

In the cellar was a large fireplace where meals were cooked for the inmates. They used to walk under an open porch to a window where the food was served. Also to be seen in the cellar was a trench where meat was stored and hidden during the Civil War.

There was a wash house, a smoke house, and a spring house. There was also a log cabin used as a carpenter's shop where coffins were made for the inmates.

It is interesting to note that old bricks from the cabins which deteriorated were used to face the front of the Nelson house across from King's Daughters' Hospital.

On Route 695 six miles south of Staunton near Arbor Hill is Sugar Loaf Farm. On a framed sampler in the dining room is a picture of the brick, antebellum house (with two rooms on each of two floors) and the date 1800. The oldest structure on the property is the mill house. There is also a spring house and a mill. The latter has been skillfully restored and contains a reception room and business offices on another floor.

In 1952 Mr. and Mrs. David G. Canning bought the farm of over 1,500 acres from Dr. W. D. Pedigo of Roanoke. Although they sold it in 1969 to Mr. Stephen Shalom of New York and Mr. W. F. Smith of Minatare, Nebraska, they will continue to live in the home. Sugar Loaf Farm is regarded as one of the outstanding livestock farms in the country, excelling in registered Aberdeen Angus cattle.

On the back of the house a large addition was built and some of the original rooms were redesigned. There are fourteen in all. The fireplace in the dining room was closed up as was another in a back bedroom. The wooden front porch was replaced by one of old brick, and here there is a sun porch. On an original window pane in the parlor the name W. Bowman is scratched. In the nineteenth century this was the home of Jacob Bowman, who operated Bowman's Distillery for Virginia wine. Prior to the pur-

chase by Jacob Bowman the property was the home of David Summers.

In the old kitchen was the usual massive fireplace. A half wheel acts as a fire screen.

On Route 695 beyond Sugar Loaf is the Cecil Bowman home. The land on which this old brick home stands was a Beverley Manor tract. Records show that in 1804 William and Mary Peery sold 320 acres of land to Andrew Thompson of Rockbridge County, who was a native of Pennsylvania.

In 1874 the heirs of John Alexander—who had acquired the land in 1859 from the heirs of Andrew Thompson—sold 344 of 363 acres to Dr. James M. Watson. In 1892 Joseph H. Clemmer acquired the property from Dr. Watson and since 1908 the C. P. Bowman family has owned it. Today it is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Bowman.

Among the interesting features of this brick house is the ice-cold, ever-flowing spring. Today not many homes have a built-in natural refrigerator in the form of a spring flowing through a stone trough in the pantry off the kitchen. The water flowing through the pantry also serves the barn, so there is no waste.

The front part of the house is original, two rooms up and down with a small bedroom between the upstairs front rooms. The back part of the house has been added. The attic, reached by wide and shallow steps, has square-pegged rafters each of which still has its number for proper placement, surely a forerunner of modern building.

The family living room has been enhanced with paneling from the old schoolhouse which stood back of the Augusta Co-op. The carved mantel was stripped to a natural finish so that both complement each other. The depth of the walls can be seen through the door to the dining room. The center hall shows the low doorway which was so typical of many of the houses constructed prior to 1850. The Bowmans also have an old photograph of the house taken many years ago.

Just below Mount Tabor Church is Springwood Farm. The present owners are Major and Mrs. Joseph P. Ast. On the living room wall is a framed list of the former owners: William Beverley, 1749; John Lockhart, who purchased the property for five shillings and owned it from 1749 to 1775; Jacob and Philip Olinger, 1775 to 1794; Christian Beard, 1794 to 1832; Peter Strauss,

1832 to 1874; Adam Brubeck, 1874 to 1887; Joseph Bowman, 1887 to 1902; Bosserman, 1902 to 1941; Fauver, 1941 to 1944; Propst, 1944 to 1951; and J. P. Ast, 1951 to the present.

A few changes have been made in the house: the original small windows were replaced with larger ones; the porch was remodeled; and a sun porch added. On the site of the wash house (only a chimney remains) a paneled guest house has been constructed. Originally there were cottages for slaves. A smoke house has been restored and has a bell on top.

Antique furniture inherited by the Asts include a large wardrobe which belonged to Mrs. Ast's grandmother, a hall rack which came from Major Ast's family, and an unusual door latch and key from England.

Located on the road from Middlebrook to Summerdean is Heritage Hill, the home of Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Nelson Cline. In our last series on old homes, we displayed Windswept Hills, at that time the Cline's home. Since then they have purchased Heritage Hill and are in the process of restoring it.

This was the home of Mrs. Cline's grandmother, but was known as the Mish place. Originally the land was part of the Beverley Manor grant and was sold to William Dean. In 1814 Windle Grove, a later owner of the land, sold it to George Mish of York County, Pennsylvania. A search of the tax records reveals quite dramatically that this large brick home was built in 1820. The tax records of 1814 show that Windle Grove paid \$4.81 on 560 acres. In 1820, with the addition of "buildings," the tax jumped to \$14.00.

Heritage Hill has one of the two brick barns in Augusta County of which we have knowledge. Because the restoration of the exterior was incomplete, we photographed interior views except for the first two slides. Of the latter, one shows the ornate brick cornice on the house and the other, the smoke house connected to the rear of the house behind the kitchen.

The kitchen is thoroughly modern but in keeping with the rest of the house. The home has been decorated in Williamsburg colors with the walls left white. The inside walls are twenty-two inches deep. The woodwork in each room is of a different design. The hardware is most interesting. (There are views of the fireplace in the dining room and the unusual latch on the door to the back stairs.) The woodwork and the chair rail in the dining room are of walnut.

In the parlor bookshelves only were added on each side of the fireplace since there was evidence that some time previously there had been shelves there. The paneling in the parlor is pine. The hallway has a lovely staircase with stair rail and newels of wild cherry; parts of the rail were carved from solid pieces of wood. A Norfolk latch is found on the door of the understairs closet, today a half bath.

Random width floor boards exist throughout the house. The master bedroom has what is known as a casket door. The window embrasures throughout the house are angled and the windows have original glass in the sashes. It will be noted that the fireplace upstairs in the master bedroom is off center and flanked by high closets reaching to the ceiling and containing built-in chests of drawers. Also of interest is the fact that the upstairs ceilings are higher than those downstairs.

A modern bathroom has been cleverly constructed in the area between the master bedroom and the two back bedrooms (at one time servants quarters reached only by back stairs out of the dining room). A snug family room has been made of the back bedroom. This is a house of eight rooms and is L-shaped.

We eagerly await drier weather so that pictures of the brick barn and the exterior of the house can be taken.

East of Newport on Route 620 is the Fulton house. William J. Fulton probably built this house about 1840. There was a two-story spring and smoke house nearby and also an old log house of six rooms used by the servants. After years of neglect only the foundation was left. The kitchen was in a separate building in the rear. All rooms, except a small back room on the second floor, had fireplaces. Steep back stairs to this little room have been removed and an elevator has been installed.

The woodwork is outstanding, with extra wide baseboards and artistic window frames. The old hardware in the house had previously been removed. The front porch and a porch on the north side were held to the house only by pressure—no bolts, nails, or even pegs. A few years ago the late George Knopp of Staunton did a skillful, artistic restoration of the front porch and some interior work, keeping the original style.

A Mr. Miller once owned the Fulton house. It was sold to a Mr. Earhart from whose daughter Col. and Mrs. James A. Bundy V purchased the property in the 1960's. A mixture of antiques and traditional and oriental art enhances this home, including a



handsome secretary and Far Eastern pottery and Wedgewood china.

Three huge sweet buckeye chestnut trees and a variety of shrubs give the yard a special beauty.

Between Route 252 and Bethel Church is Ridgeview Farm. Formerly known as the Kerr place, this house on 227 acres was built about 1839. The property now has the added beauty of three man-made ponds. An early owner of the farm was William Grim, a potter of Augusta County. [William Grim and his family of potters are mentioned in an article in *Augusta Historical Bulletin*, Vol. IX, No. 1 (Spring 1973), pp. 12-14.]

Mr. and Mrs. A. Meade Reames purchased the property in 1956 from Dr. and Mrs. Black. The home has been artistically restored and modernized. The living room fireplace was dug out and the floors sanded down to the old pine boards.

In the *Staunton Leader*, August 10, 1971, was a feature article concerning the unearthing of a kiln used by the Grims in their pottery business and suggesting that the bricks were probably made on the place.

South on U.S. 11 at Mint Spring is the Robert Funk home. Several years ago this old brick house was purchased by Carroll Fauber and partially restored. Later Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Funk acquired it and are completing the restoration.

This is a lovely old home built in 1820 by George Pepperly on land that had seen five owners back to 1780 when it was purchased by Thomas Stephenson from Patrick Campbell. Campbell, in turn, had acquired the property in 1771 from Robert Beverley.

It is a house of nine rooms at present; originally there were two up and two down in front and a kitchen ell all constructed at the same time. The walls are sixteen inches thick and are solid brick. Still existing are the original mantels and hardware including old English locks. The front door key is four to five inches long. The windows still contain much of the old glass. The floors are of random-width boards; the ceilings are twelve feet high, and the rooms measure fifteen by eighteen feet.

Outside large boxwood enhance the yard. Most fascinating are one dozen English walnut trees which still bear crops of nuts.

On a lane off Route 340 is the old Wallace place, Green Pastures. On the brass knocker on the front door is the name of the

house. It was purchased in 1972 from David Turner who had resided there for some twenty years. The present owners are Mr. and Mrs. Michael Toner of Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

According to the original deed the property contained two hundred acres; three hundred were added. The rear of the house is a log structure built in the late 1700's; the brick addition was put on about 1801 to 1803. The joining of the two can be seen on a wall inside the house. The front porch is a more recent addition.

In the old upstairs bedroom there are small window panes, some with original glass. Heavy wooden beams in the ceiling have been refinished. According to Dr. Herbert Turner, many years ago when the house was being restored a narrow wooden strip about five feet up and around the walls of the room had sawed-off wooden pegs in it. These pegs had been used in the early days as clothes hangers.

Also in the early days there had been a separate kitchen. The chimney is still standing. The bricks were made across the creek where the slave houses had been built; a foundation of one is still evident.

Off Route 340 on Route 655 is Walnut Hills, the old Christian place. It was established about 1732 on land which was conveyed to Robert, John, and William Christian by William Beverley in 1739. The deed for the 1,614 acres is recorded in the Orange County Clerk's Office. At a later period the Christian sisters used to sit on their front porch and visit with their grandfather who was a close friend of General Robert E. Lee.

In an old insurance policy this is described as a brick-nobbed house. The exterior is weatherboard covering brick and mortar walls. The house has been remodeled for modern living and yet has been authentically restored since its purchase by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Koogler about five years ago. A roomy extension was added in the basement making a recreation room with a large fireplace. The stone is from the chimney of the old slave quarters which had deteriorated.

The original house had eight rooms with the kitchen in the basement. A dumbwaiter went from the first to the second floor but has since been removed. The hardwood floors are original as are the handsome walnut doors and woodwork. Each room has a fireplace.

One bedroom had a rope bed, under which there was a trundle bed used by the children. There are many choice antiques in

the house, including a lamp well over one hundred years old, a china press, and a set of blue glass in the tear drop and tassel design.

The spring house is most attractive. Roman numerals were found on the timber indicating where it was put together. It is claimed that seven springs were on the property and at one time water was sold commercially.

Mr. and Mrs. Koogler have an extensive camping ground on their property, with a picnic area, miniature golf course, and swimming pool. The old barn has been converted for use as a store and an office.



Schutterlee Mill.

Photograph by William H. Payne

## RUN-OF-THE-MILL

Richard S. Lewis

It was spring and my friends were down for their annual visit to my home in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. We were taking one of our favorite drives—away from the new interstates—down the back winding roads where one can still see the real countryside with its neat farms, its country homesteads.

Just on the outskirts of a village heading west there is a long steep hill from which the view is justly famous. Mile upon mile of lush country rolls out—bright green meadows and fields, brown squares of rich ploughed earth, softly wooded hillsides—all set against an almost theatrical backdrop of blue and purple mountains piled up, creased and folded by sunlight and cloud shadow.

At the brow of the hill one of my friends suddenly exclaimed, "There's something missing down there." I looked again, and down by the shining river something was missing. I suddenly realized that the weathered old mill, with its immense water wheel, had vanished. It had been a landmark for ages.

"Too bad," I said. "Another one gone. I suppose it had fallen in ruins and they had to tear it down."

Inwardly I sighed and that started a trend of thought. Old mills—and milling itself—have always fascinated me. In our part of the Valley there once had been fifty mills at the least, ranging from the old water wheels to larger and more sophisticated operations. One by one they had ground to a halt and now there are only a few left, some in partial operation. What had caused the death of so great a number of mills?

Well, for one thing, families had become smaller and the womenfolk more emancipated. Their lives involved much more activity than spending half their time in the kitchen baking bread—much easier to drop by the nearest supermarket and pick up a loaf of bread or a quick biscuit mix. Gone were the days of crisp, brown-crust loaves fresh from the oven, and of hot rolls spread with newly churned butter and topped with home-made preserves. (At least this was the situation when the mills began to die, although happily the picture is beginning to change as a new interest in home baking is surging up among many modern housewives. It is becoming an "in" thing to have one's own freshly baked bread.)

Another factor in the demise of the mills at the time were the difficulties the small independent farmer faced in attempting to maintain his father's and grandfather's way of life and livelihood. With the government becoming ever more involved, the shortage of farm labor, the soaring costs of farm machinery, and larger farm operations moving into the Valley, the onetime farmer found himself working full time in modern new plants and industries. He did a little farming on the side, raising less and less grain. As a consequence the flour mills—long a very vital part of the farm scene—began to be in serious trouble for the first time.

Today, fortunately, many of the mill buildings around our area still stand. Invariably they seem to be located in delightfully picturesque areas, nestled down in cozy spots near wooded hill-sides by a sparkling river. There is usually a quiet mill pond (sometimes with white geese in the foreground to complete the picture) and a glistening waterfall whose cascades produce a soothing rhythm. Nearby will stand the miller's residence, often a handsome old structure of great age, for the miller in those days was an affluent and important man in his rural community.

One such mill place I especially like is the old Schutterlee Mill, built sometime after the Revolutionary War by one Peter Hanger. Its spacious cream-brick residence stands on a rise above the river. Tradition has it that Peter's ghost appears at times to the members of different generations. I once asked the present owner about Peter's ghost. He chuckled: "I've never seen him myself, but my father has. I've heard him speak of it." In my mind's eye I could see old Peter in his knee-breeches, descending at dusk from his grave on the hill just to see that everything at the mill was running smoothly.

In interesting contrast to the small country mill was the big, once enormously profitable, White Star Mill in Staunton, located at the end of New Street up against the Chesapeake and Ohio depot. This giant of mills, five stories of old mellowed brick and fieldstone foundation, was erected in 1890 by a local group of entrepreneurs—Michael Kivlighan, Isaac Witz, Charles Holt, and Andrew Bolling—in a venture which enriched its town through the years. The building at that time dominated the landscape and became a gathering place for farmers and their families up and down the county.

The mill employed around twenty-four persons at its peak, including an office staff. It ran on shifts day and night grinding

its grains into name-brand flour, sold not only locally but shipped all over the country. Any day the lower depot platform would be swamped with barrels upon barrels of flour, placed there to be loaded on freight cars. Melrose flour was the top grade and even today there are grandmothers, mothers, and daughters who speak affectionately of Melrose flour as of an old friend. "It's been part of our family all our lives," they will say. "We just wouldn't bake with any other kind of flour."

When grain was being ground, the hum and vibration could be heard over that part of town, and during the sweltering wheat season the area around the mill was bedlam. Lines of horse-drawn wagons and carts bearing entire families and piled high with precious golden grain rolled into town. There is a faded photograph taken one memorable day when wheat went up a dollar a bushel; columns of wagons, often three or four abreast, reached back as far as the eye could see. It reminded one of a scene from the old silent movie *The Covered Wagon*.

On such days there would be the smell of horses and perspiration, and wheat chaff would be blown in the air. Voices clamored, children played, and men folk clustered to gossip about subjects dear to their hearts—crops, weather, livestock, planting,



White Star Mill, Staunton.

Photograph by William H. B. Thomas

harvesting. Often the wives walked over town to window-shop on Main Street for luxuries they were unable to afford.

Some families packed their lunches—there was a tree-shaded creek running close by—and others went over to the market place near Johnson Street where brisk trading went on, and there were restaurants and numerous saloons where the men could quench their thirst. Finally, near day's end the farmer and his family—the farmer with money in his pocket from the sale of his grain and the wagon stacked with provisions—would head back toward the fastness of their farm homesteads, with memories of their day in town to stimulate them until the next trip.

The White Star Mill—king of them—struggled valiantly to keep going through the 1950's, but then in mid-1960, as many others had, quietly closed its doors. Its great brick bulk stands now gaunt and silent against the sky, the area around seems deserted, and even the pigeons which once endlessly circled the place to dart down for spilled grain are seldom seen.

Today, Staunton has emerged from a sleepy little town into a thriving and growing city. The once-green hills surrounding its outskirts are jammed with suburbia which still stretches their tentacles, swallowing more of the countryside. There are large shopping centers springing up over night, endless townhouse complexes and manufacturing plants dotted about, and interstate highways honeycombing once rolling fields and meadows. Tourism is on the increase.

Many of the older families on their farms and in their country houses have long since passed from the scene or they moved into town where their descendants live. Their homes have been bought by out-of-state folk who have come to discover and love the beauty of the Valley.

Despite all of this change, there seems to be an almost inexhaustible abundance of rural beauty left. One is rewarded in pursuing old back roads and lanes where one finds beauty spots tucked away in charming nooks and crannies. And to my mind the most romantic and interesting of all are the remnants of the old mills and their handsome residences—no longer busy hubs of activity, but standing there deserted and as though dreaming of the days when they reigned supreme.

## OLD HOMES OF AUGUSTA COUNTY

Chapel Hill

The Charles J. Churchman Home

Gladys B. Clem

Many a budding romance had its start in the enforced confines of the early sailing ships as they crossed the Atlantic on their way to America. Often these shipboard meetings later culminated in marriage. It was with this storied precedent that the first John Churchman arrived in America.

When a lad of sixteen he and members of the Thomas Carey family had sailed from Saffron, Wessex, England in 1683 to try their fortunes in the New World. They were all well aware the journey would be both hazardous and long.

As Hannah, the Carey's little six-year-old daughter, played and romped about the deck, something of the child's winsome charm appealed to the lone teen-age boy now leaving home and friends so far behind.

After arriving in Philadelphia Churchman must have kept in touch with the Carey family for some years. In any event he never forgot the little girl who broke the tedium of the long journey with her bright and laughing ways. Whether it was a renewed friendship or a prolonged courtship history does not disclose. Only the fact that John Churchman and Hannah Carey were married in 1696, thereby establishing the family in American annals, is a matter of record.

Succeeding generations remained in the northern colonies until a descendant, another John Churchman, took up land in Virginia near the site of present New Hope in the early 1800's. He became the progenitor of the family in Augusta County and a patriarch in his own time — having fathered a family of fourteen children!

One of his sons, John Churchman, later purchased a sizeable tract of land in the southern part of the county where he built his house, Chapel Hill. Located on Route 654 between Route 11 and Stuarts Draft, it has been home to six generations of the Churchman line and is one of the few holdings in the county remaining in the ownership of the original family.





Chapel Hill.  
Photograph by William H. Bushman



Hand-blocked wall paper, Chapel Hill.  
Photograph by William H. Bushman

He selected a site on a gentle slope among the rolling hills of south Augusta. On a nearby knoll stood a small Episcopal chapel. It was from this the estate received its name. An antiquated communion service, a hand-carved wooden sign, and the chapel bell remain at the farm as mementos of the small sanctuary that once served the people of the community. When Churchman built his home in 1816-1817, skill, artistry, and craftsmanship were paramount; the length of time of construction was secondary. Numerous details throughout the dwelling bear out this fact.

The original structure, consisting of four rooms and two central halls, is Georgian in style. Double entrance doors, finished with graceful fanlight and sidelights, open into a broad and spacious hall. The original English lock with its huge brass key has remained in constant use throughout the years. The doors are exceptional in design; there are carved concave inlays inserted horizontally between the panels. A wide circular stairway with intricate and delicate carving winds gracefully up to the second story. The steps are broad and the treads are painted to give a marbled effect, an art form much in vogue in the early 1800's. A stately old grandfather's clock that has ticked away the years as well as the generations stands at the foot of the stairs.

On the left of the front hall is the parlor, reminiscent of the day when elegance was given prominent consideration. Exemplifying this is the parlor's imported hand-blocked wall paper depicting scenes in the garden of Versailles. The coloring is still as true as when the paper was placed on the walls at the time the house was built. The finely carved mantel above the black marble fireplace and the paneling around the deeply embrasured windows and doorways of corresponding design are all indicative of the period when artisans plied their trade to extraordinary perfection. A brass chandelier hangs from the twelve-foot ceiling.

To the right of the main hall is the living room. Here the mantel is distinctive with its modified floral design. The doors are broad and are of the crusader type. The woodwork detail is duplicated throughout the room, even to the paneling beneath the chair rail.

In later years two other rooms were added to the right of the original structure. Tall white columns fronting this addition gave both breadth and length to the original facade. Architectural changes in later years, however, substituted for the columns the present wide portico. Numerous additions during the



Circular stairway, Chapel Hill.  
 Photograph by William H. Bushman

century and a half of the dwelling's history have enlarged it to its present size of ten rooms, two hallways, and two baths.

John Churchman married Anne Cosby Tapp November 23, 1819 and brought her as a bride to Chapel Hill. Here they raised their family of seven children — four daughters and three sons. As a substantial citizen and land owner, Churchman took part in both official and religious affairs of the community. At one time he served as High Sheriff of Augusta County .

He died at Chapel Hill in 1870 and his will was probated on July 25 of that year. He was buried in Thornrose Cemetery, according to his wishes, "beside his beloved wife."

Churchman's will is highly indicative of his fatherly concern as well as broad vision. After making provisions for his children

"with the desire that the family homestead remain in the name of the family," he further stipulated

that one and one-half acres of land, included for use of the Episcopal Chapel, now situated on my farm to be laid off in a manner most beneficial and convenient for the said Chapel to be conveyed to the Reverend John Johns, Bishop of the Diocese of Virginia and his successor in office. The said Chapel and its grounds to be used as a place of worship by members of the Protestant Episcopal Church and under the control of the said Bishop. Should the Chapel and its grounds be discontinued as a place of worship for the space of ten years, consecutively, the said grounds shall revert to the heirs of my estate.

Mindful of his children's spiritual as well as secular needs, John Churchman further designated that "pew 29 in the Episcopal Church in Staunton I desire to be kept for the use of my family."

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